

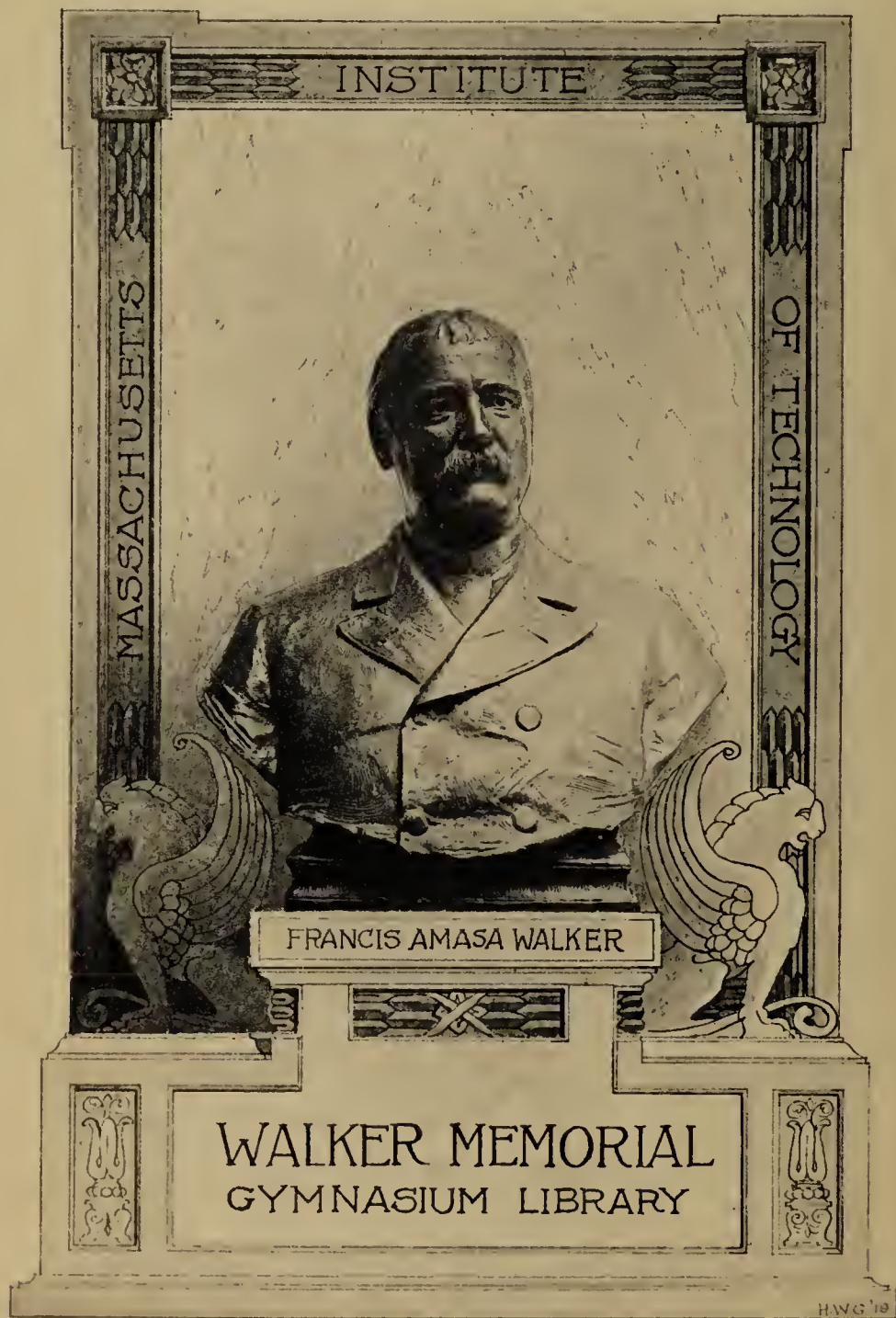
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THE WORKS OF  
CHARLES DICKENS

NATIONAL LIBRARY EDITION

VOLUME

XXXVII



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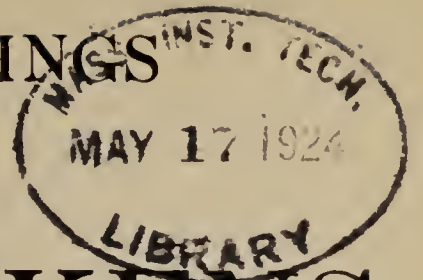




CHARLES DICKENS. AGE 49.



THE COMPLETE WRITINGS  
OF  
CHARLES DICKENS



INCLUDING HIS NOVELS AND TALES, LETTERS  
AND SPEECHES, PLAYS AND POEMS,  
MISCELLANIES, ETC., AND

FORSTER'S LIFE OF CHARLES DICKENS

IN FORTY VOLUMES

*ILLUSTRATED*

VOLUME THIRTY-SEVEN

LETTERS, 1833-1870, Part I

BOSTON

CHARLES E. LAURIAT COMPANY

1923



# CHARLES DICKENS

THE LIFE OF CHARLES DICKENS  
BY JOHN R. S. PHILLIPS  
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY THE AUTHOR

LONDON: THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO PRESS, 1901.

Vol. I.

1901.

THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO PRESS  
1901.



# THE LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

Edited by

HIS SISTER-IN-LAW AND HIS ELDEST  
DAUGHTER

With which are Incorporated his  
LETTERS TO WILKIE COLLINS

Selected by

GEORGINA HOGARTH

And Edited by

LAURENCE HUTTON

1833-1870

---

## THE SPEECHES OF CHARLES DICKENS

1841-1870

Compiled by

RICHARD HERNE SHEPHERD

---

*WITH A PORTRAIT OF DICKENS.*

---

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I

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*'The Letters of Charles Dickens' were originally published in three volumes: the first two on November 21, 1879, and a third volume on November 2, 1881. In May 1882 the complete series, with additions and revisions, was issued in two volumes uniform with the 'Charles Dickens' Edition of the Works, and a single volume edition with further revisions in 1893.*

*In the present edition the text of the 1893 edition is followed, with which is incorporated, by arrangement with Messrs. Harper and Brothers, the contents of the volume entitled 'Letters of Charles Dickens to Wilkie Collins,' selected by Georgina Hogarth and edited by Laurence Hutton, published in 1892.*

*'The Speeches of Charles Dickens' were first collected by Richard Herne Shepherd and published in 1870. In 1884 Messrs. Chatto and Windus issued a reprint, and the text of that edition is used in the present instance. Two speeches have been added, namely those delivered on February 6, 1850, and April 12, 1864.*



TO  
KATE PERUGINI  
THIS MEMORIAL OF HER FATHER  
IS LOVINGLY INSCRIBED  
BY HER AUNT AND SISTER





# CONTENTS

## LETTERS

	PAGE
BOOK I. 1833 to 1842 . . . . .	3
BOOK II. 1843 to 1857 . . . . .	99
BOOK III. 1858 to 1870 . . . . .	559

1876

1877

1878

1879

1880

1881

1882

1883

# BOOK I

1833 TO 1842





# PREFACES

## PREFACE TO THE ORIGINAL EDITION

WE intend this Collection of Letters to be a Supplement to the *Life of Charles Dickens*, by John Forster. That work, perfect and exhaustive as a biography, is only incomplete as regards correspondence; the scheme of the book having made it impossible to include in its space any letters, or hardly any, besides those addressed to Mr. Forster. As no man ever expressed *himself* more in his letters than Charles Dickens, we believe that in publishing this careful selection from his general correspondence we shall be supplying a want which has been universally felt.

Our request for the loan of letters was so promptly and fully responded to, that we have been provided with more than sufficient material for our work. By arranging the letters in chronological order, we find that they very frequently explain themselves and form a narrative of the events of each year. Our collection dates from 1833, the commencement of Charles Dickens' literary life, just before the starting of the *Pickwick Papers*, and is carried on up to the day before his death, in 1870.

We find some difficulty in being quite accurate in the arrangements of letters up to the end of 1839, for he had a careless habit in those days about dating his letters, very frequently putting only the day of the week on which he wrote, curiously in contrast with the habit of his later life, when his dates were always of the very fullest.

A blank is made in Charles Dickens' correspondence with his family by the absence of any letter addressed to his daughter Kate (Mrs. Perugini), to her great regret and to ours. In 1873, her furniture and other possessions were stored in the warehouse of the Pantechnicon at the time of the great fire there. All her property was destroyed, and, among other things, a box of papers which included her letters from her father.

## xii    LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

It was our intention as well as our desire to have thanked, individually, every one—both living friends and representatives of dead ones—for their readiness to give us every possible help to make our work complete. But the number of such friends, besides correspondents hitherto unknown, who have volunteered contributions of letters, make it impossible in our space to do otherwise than to express, collectively, our earnest and heartfelt thanks.

A separate word of gratitude, however, must be given by us to Mr. Wilkie Collins for the invaluable help which we have received from his great knowledge and experience, in the technical part of our work, and for the deep interest which he has shown from the beginning, in our undertaking.

It is a great pleasure to us to have the name of Henry Fielding Dickens associated with this book. To him, for the very important assistance he has given in making our Index, we return our loving thanks.

In writing our explanatory notes we have, we hope, left nothing out which in any way requires explanation from us. But we have purposely made them as short as possible; our great desire being to give to the public another book from Charles Dickens' own hands—as it were, a portrait of himself by himself.

Those letters which need no explanation—and of those we have many—we give without a word from us.

In publishing the more private letters, we do so with the view of showing him in his homely, domestic life—of showing how in the midst of his own constant and arduous work, no household matter was considered too trivial to claim his care and attention. He would take as much pains about the hanging of a picture, the choosing of furniture, the superintending any little improvement in the house, as he would about the more serious business of his life; thus carrying out to the very letter his favourite motto of 'What is worth doing at all is worth doing well.'

MAMIE DICKENS.  
GEORGINA HOGARTH,

LONDON, *October*, 1879.



## PREFACE TO THE 'CHARLES DICKENS' EDITION

IN publishing this New Edition of the *Letters of Charles Dickens* in a popular form, we have taken great pains to make our work complete. We have carefully revised and corrected the contents of our previous books, now condensed, chronologically, into two volumes.

With a view to making our selection as perfect as possible, we have collected together the letters from Charles Dickens which have already been published in various Biographies, and have chosen those which we consider to be of the greatest interest.

We intend this Collection of Letters to be a Supplement to the *Life of Charles Dickens*, by John Forster. That work, admirable and exhaustive as a biography, is only incomplete as regards correspondence; the scheme of the book having made it impossible to include in its space any letters, or hardly any, besides those addressed to Mr. Forster. As no man ever expressed *himself* more in his letters than Charles Dickens, we believe that in publishing this careful selection from his general correspondence we are supplying a want which has been universally felt.

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very letter his favourite motto of 'What is worth doing at all is worth doing well.'

MAMIE DICKENS.  
GEORGINA HOGARTH.

LONDON, *March*, 1882.

### PREFACE TO THE 1893 EDITION

THERE is very little to say in addition to the original Preface to our book, except that this Edition, which is in a cheaper and more popular form than either of the previous Editions, has been again very carefully revised and corrected by us, and we hope it will help to make the *Letters of Charles Dickens* more widely known than they have hitherto been.

Since we published, in 1882, the Edition in two volumes to which the above Preface belongs, many of the dear friends to whom some of the most interesting and the brightest of these letters were addressed have passed away. This has added to the sadness of our task, but it adds also a new interest to the letters, which are so fresh and life-like that they seem to give graphic portraits both of the writer himself and of the friends to whom he wrote.

MAMIE DICKENS.  
GEORGINA HOGARTH.

LONDON, *January*, 1893.





THE LETTERS OF CHARLES  
DICKENS





# THE LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

1833 OR 1834, AND 1835, 1836, 1837

## NARRATIVE

WE have been able to procure so few early letters of any general interest that we put these first years together. Charles Dickens was then living, as a bachelor, in Furnival's Inn, and was engaged as a parliamentary reporter on the *Morning Chronicle*. The *Sketches by Boz* were written during these years, published first in the *Monthly Magazine* and continued in the *Evening Chronicle*. He was engaged to be married to Catherine Hogarth in 1835—the marriage took place on the 2nd April 1836; and he continued to live in Furnival's Inn with his wife for more than a year after their marriage. They passed the summer months of that year in a lodging at Chalk, near Gravesend, in the neighbourhood associated with all his life, from his childhood to his death. The two letters which we publish, addressed to his wife as Miss Hogarth, have no date, but were written in 1835. The first of the two refers to the offer made to him by Messrs. Chapman and Hall to edit a monthly periodical, the 'emolument' (which he calls 'too tempting to resist!') to be fourteen pounds a month. The bargain was concluded, and this was the starting of *The Pickwick Papers*. The first number was published in March 1836. The second letter to Miss Hogarth was written after he had completed three numbers of *Pickwick*, and the character who is to 'make a decided hit' is 'Jingle.'

From the commencement of *The Pickwick Papers*, and of Charles Dickens' married life, dates the commencement of his literary life and his sudden world-wide fame. And this year saw the beginning of many of those friendships which

## 6 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

he most valued, and of which he had most reason to be proud, and which friendships were ended only by death. Most especially to be noted is his first letter to Mr. Macready.

In January 1837 Charles Dickens was living in Furnival's Inn, where his first child, a son, was born. It was an eventful year to him in many ways. He removed from Furnival's Inn to Doughty Street in March, and here he sustained the first great grief of his life. His young sister-in-law, Mary Hogarth, to whom he was devotedly attached, died very suddenly, at his house, on the 7th May. In the Autumn of this year he took lodgings at Broadstairs. This was his first visit to that pleasant little watering-place, of which he became very fond, and whither he removed for the autumn months with all his household for many years in succession.

Besides the monthly numbers of *Pickwick*, which were going on through this year until November, when the last number appeared, he had commenced *Oliver Twist*, which was appearing also in monthly parts, in the magazine called *Bentley's Miscellany*, long before *Pickwick* was completed. And during this year he had edited, for Mr. Bentley, *The Life of Grimaldi*, the celebrated clown. To this book he wrote himself only the preface, and altered and rearranged the autobiographical MS., which was in Mr. Bentley's possession.

The first letter of this book is addressed to Henry Austin, a friend of Charles Dickens from his boyhood, who afterwards married his second sister Letitia. It bears no date, but must have been written in 1833 or 1834, during the early days of his reporting for the *Morning Chronicle*; the journey on which he was 'ordered' being for that paper.

The first letter to his friend, Mr. J. P. Harley, the actor, which is undated, but must have been written about 1836, refers to a farce called *The Strange Gentleman*, founded on one of the *Sketches*, called 'The Great Winglebury Duel,' which Charles Dickens wrote expressly for Mr. Harley, and which was produced at the St. James's Theatre, under the management of Mr. Braham.

The letters which we give to Mr. John Hullah, the well-known composer, and a very early friend of Charles Dickens,



are all on the subject of an operetta called *The Village Coquettes*, written by him and the music by Mr. Hullah, which was also produced at the St. James's Theatre.

The 'present' alluded to in the letter to Mrs. Hogarth was a chain made of Mary Hogarth's hair, sent on the first anniversary, after her death, of her birthday.

The letter to Mr. Thomas Tegg, the publisher, was upon the subject of a proposal to Charles Dickens to write for Mr. Tegg a work to be entitled 'Serjeant Bell and his Raree Show.' The terms were agreed upon and accepted, but for some reason the project fell through.

FURNIVAL'S INN, *Wednesday Night, past 12.*

DEAR HENRY,—I have just been ordered on a journey, the length of which is at present uncertain. I may be back on Sunday very probably, and start again on the following day. Should this be the case, you shall hear from me before.

Don't laugh. I am going (alone) in a gig; and, to quote the eloquent inducements which the proprietors of Hampstead *chays* hold out to Sunday riders—'the gen'l'm'n drives himself.' I am going into Essex and Suffolk. It strikes me I shall be spilt before I pay a turnpike. I have a presentiment I shall run over an only child before I reach Chelmsford, my first stage.

Let the evident haste of this specimen of 'The Polite Letter Writer' be its excuse, and

Believe me, dear Henry, most sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature of Charles Dickens in cursive script, with a long, horizontal flourish underneath.

NOTE.—To avoid the monotony of a constant repetition, we propose to dispense with the signature at the close of each letter, excepting the first and last letters of our collection. Charles Dickens' handwriting altered so much during the years of his life, that we have thought it advisable to give a facsimile of his

## 8      LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

autograph to this our first letter; and we reproduce in the same way his latest autograph.

13 FURNIVAL'S INN, *Tuesday Evening, Twentieth January, 1835.*<sup>1</sup>

Mr. George  
Hogarth.

MY DEAR SIR,—As you have begged me to write an original sketch for the first number of the new evening paper, and as I trust to your kindness to refer my application to the proper quarter, should I be unreasonably or improperly trespassing upon you, I beg to ask whether it is probable that if I commenced a series of articles, written under some attractive title, for the *Evening Chronicle*, its conductors would think I had any claim to *some* additional remuneration (of course, of no great amount) for doing so?

Let me beg of you not to misunderstand my meaning. Whatever the reply may be, I promised you an article, and shall supply it with the utmost readiness, and with an anxious desire to do my best, which I honestly assure you would be the feeling with which I shall always receive any request coming personally from yourself. I merely wish to put it to the proprietors, first, whether a continuation of light papers in the style of my 'Street Sketches' would be considered of use to the new paper; and, secondly, if so, whether they do not think it fair and reasonable that, taking my share of the ordinary reporting business of the *Chronicle* besides, I should receive something for the papers beyond my ordinary salary as a reporter.

Begging you to excuse my troubling you, and taking this opportunity of acknowledging the numerous kindnesses I have already received at your hands since I have had the pleasure of acting under you, I am, my dear Sir,

Very sincerely yours.

FURNIVAL'S INN, *Wednesday Evening, 1835.*

Miss  
Hogarth.

MY DEAREST KATE,—The House is up; but I am very sorry to say that I must stay at home. I have had a visit from the publishers this morning, and the

<sup>1</sup> Printed in *Forty Years' Recollections of Life, Literature, and Public Affairs*, by Charles Mackay.



story cannot be any longer delayed; it must be done to-morrow, as there are more important considerations than the mere payment for the story involved too. I must exercise a little self-denial, and set to work.

They (Chapman and Hall) have made me an offer of fourteen pounds a month, to write and edit a new publication they contemplate, entirely by myself, to be published monthly, and each number to contain four woodcuts. I am to make my estimate and calculation, and to give them a decisive answer on Friday morning. The work will be no joke, but the emolument is too tempting to resist.

. . . . .

*Sunday Evening.*

. . . . .

I have at this moment got Pickwick and his friends on the Rochester coach and they are going on swimmingly, in company with a very different character from any I have yet described, who I flatter myself will make a decided hit. I want to get them from the ball to the inn before I go to bed; and I think that will take until one or two o'clock at the earliest. The publishers will be here in the morning, so you will readily suppose I have no alternative but to stick at my desk.

. . . . .

FURNIVAL'S INN, *Sunday Evening* (1836) (?).

MY DEAR HULLAH,—Have you seen the *Ex-aminer*? It is rather depreciatory of the opera; but, like all inveterate critiques against Braham, so well done that I cannot help laughing at it, for the life and soul of me. I have seen the *Sunday Times*, the *Dispatch*, and the *Satirist*, all of which blow their critic trumpets against unhappy me most lustily. Either I must have grievously awakened the ire of all the 'adapters' and their friends, or the drama must be decidedly bad. I haven't made up my mind yet which of the two is the fact.

I have not seen the *John Bull* or any of the Sunday papers except the *Spectator*. If you have any of them,

## 10 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

bring 'em with you on Tuesday. I am afraid that for 'dirty Cummins' allusion to Hogarth I shall be reduced to the necessity of being valorous the next time I meet him.—  
Believe me, Most faithfully yours.

FURNIVAL'S INN, *Monday Afternoon, 7 o'clock* (1836).

The same. MY DEAR HULLAH,—Mr. Hogarth has just been here, with news which I think you will be glad to hear. He was with Braham yesterday, who was *far more full* of the opera than he was; speaking highly of my works and 'fame' (!), and expressing an earnest desire to be the first to introduce me to the public as a dramatic writer. He said that he intended opening at Michaelmas; and added (un-asked) that it was his intention to produce the opera within *one month* of his first night. He wants a low comedy part introduced—without singing—thinking it will take with the audience; but he is desirous of explaining to me what he means and who he intends to play it. I am to see him on Sunday morning. Full particulars of the interview shall be duly announced.  
Most faithfully yours.

PETERSHAM, *Monday Evening* (1836).

Mr. John Hullah. DEAR HULLAH,—Since I called on you this morning I have not had time to look over the words of 'The Child and the Old Man.' It occurs to me, as I shall see you on Wednesday morning, that the best plan will be for you to bring the music (if you possibly can) without the words, and we can put them in then. Of course this observation applies only to that particular song.

Braham having sent to me about the farce, I called on him this morning. Harley wrote, when he had read the whole of the opera, saying: 'It's a sure card—nothing wrong there. Bet you ten pound it runs fifty nights. Come; don't be afraid. You'll be the gainer by it, and you mustn't mind betting; it's a capital custom.' They tell the story with infinite relish. I saw the fair manageress,<sup>1</sup> who is fully of Harley's opinion, so is Braham. The only difference is, that they are far more enthusiastic than Harley

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Braham.



—far more enthusiastic than ourselves even. That is a bold word, isn't it? It is a true one, nevertheless.

'Depend upon it, sir,' said Braham to Hogarth yesterday when he went there to say I should be in town to-day, 'depend upon it, sir, that there has been no such music since the days of Shield, and no such piece since *The Duenna*. Everybody is delighted with it,' he added, to me to-day. 'I played it to Stansbury, who is by no means an excitable person, and he was *charmed*.' This was said with great emphasis, but I have forgotten the grand point. It was not, 'I played it to Stansbury,' but 'I sang it—*all through!!!*'

I begged him, as the choruses are to be put into rehearsal directly the company get together, to let us have, through Mrs. Braham, the necessary passports to the stage, which will be forwarded. He leaves town on the *Eighth of September*. He will be absent a month, and the first rehearsal will take place immediately on his return; previous to it (I mean the first rehearsal—not the return) I am to read the piece. His only remaining suggestion is, that Miss Rainforth will want another song when the piece is in rehearsal—'a bravura—something in "The Soldier Tired" way.' We must have a confab about this on Wednesday morning.

Harley called in Furnival's Inn, to express his high delight and gratification, but unfortunately we had left town.—  
Believe me, dear Hullah,                      Most faithfully yours.

48 DOUGHTY STREET, *Saturday Morning*.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have considered the terms on <sup>Mr. J. P.</sup> which I could afford just now to sell Mr. Braham <sup>Harley.</sup> the acting copyright in London of an entirely new piece for the St. James's Theatre; and I could not sit down to write one in a single act of about one hour long, under a hundred pounds. For a new piece in two acts, a hundred and fifty pounds would be the sum I should require.

I do not know whether, with reference to arrangements that were made with any other writers, this may or may not appear a large item. I state it merely with regard to the value of my own time and writings at this moment; and in

## 12 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

so doing I assure you I place the remuneration below the mark rather than above it.

As you begged me to give you my reply upon this point, perhaps you will lay it before Mr. Braham. If these terms exceed his inclination or the ability of the theatre, there is an end of the matter, and no harm done.—Believe me,

Ever faithfully yours.

48 DOUGHTY STREET, *Wednesday Evening.*

Mr. W. C.  
Macready.

MY DEAR SIR,—There is a semi-business, semi-pleasure little dinner which I intend to give at The Prince of Wales, in Leicester Place, Leicester Square, on Saturday, at five for half-past precisely, at which only Talfourd, Forster, Ainsworth, Jerdan, and the publishers will be present. It is to celebrate (that is too great a word, but I can think of no better) the conclusion of my *Pickwick* labours; and so I intend, before you take that roll upon the grass you spoke of, to beg your acceptance of one of the first complete copies of the work. I shall be much delighted if you would join us.

I know too well the many anxieties that press upon you just now to seek to persuade you to come if you would prefer a night's repose and quiet. Let me assure you, notwithstanding, most honestly and heartily that there is no one I should be more happy or gratified to see, and that among your brilliant circle of well-wishers and admirers you number none more unaffectedly and faithfully yours than, my dear Sir,

Yours most truly.

15 FURNIVAL'S INN, *Wednesday Morning, 1837.*<sup>1</sup>

Mr.  
Thomas  
Tegg.

DEAR SIR,—I have made the nearest calculation in my power of the length of the little work you speak of; and guiding my own demand by the nature of the arrangements I am in the habit of making with other booksellers, I could not agree to do it for less than a hundred and twenty pounds.

I am not aware what the profit is upon this description of Book, or whether it would, or would not, justify you in such

<sup>1</sup> This Letter has been already printed in *Notes and Queries*.



an outlay. If it would, I should be prepared to produce the whole by Christmas—the sale at that time of year, I apprehend, would be important.

For many reasons I should agree with you, in not wishing the name of 'Boz' to be appended to the work.

I shall be happy to receive your answer before I leave town, which will most probably be on Wednesday next.—  
I am, dear Sir,                      Your very obedient Servant.

DOUGHTY STREET, *Thursday Night, Twenty-sixth October, 1837.*

MY DEAR MRS. HOGARTH,—I need not thank <sup>Mrs.</sup> you for your present of yesterday, for you know <sup>Hogarth.</sup> the sorrowful pleasure I shall take in wearing it, and the care with which I shall prize it, until—so far as relates to this life—I am like her.

I have never had her ring off my finger by day or night, except for an instant at a time, to wash my hands, since she died. I have never had her sweetness and excellence absent from my mind so long. I can solemnly say that, waking or sleeping, I have never lost the recollection of our hard trial and sorrow, and I feel that I never shall.

It will be a great relief to my heart when I find you sufficiently calm upon this sad subject to claim the promise I made you when she lay dead in this house, never to shrink from speaking of her, as if her memory must be avoided, but rather to take a melancholy pleasure in recalling the times when we were all so happy—so happy that increase of fame and prosperity has only widened the gap in my affections, by causing me to think how she would have shared and enhanced all our joys, and how proud I should have been (as God knows I always was) to possess the affections of the gentlest and purest creature that ever shed a light on earth. I wish you could know how I weary now for the three rooms in Furnival's Inn, and how I miss that pleasant smile and those sweet words which, bestowed upon our evening's work, in our merry banterings round the fire, were more precious to me than the applause of a whole world would be. I can recall everything she said and did

## 14 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

in those happy days, and could show you every passage and line we read together.

I see *now* how you are capable of making great efforts, even against the afflictions you have to deplore, and I hope that, soon, our words may be where our thoughts are, and that we may call up those old memories, not as shadows of the bitter past, but as lights upon a happier future.—Believe me, my dear Mrs. Hogarth,

Ever truly and affectionately yours.

1838

### NARRATIVE

IN February of this year Charles Dickens made an expedition with his friend, and the illustrator of most of his books, Mr. Hablôt K. Browne ('Phiz'), to investigate for himself the real facts as to the condition of the Yorkshire schools, and it may be observed that portions of a letter to his wife, dated Greta Bridge, Yorkshire, which will be found among the following letters, were reproduced in *Nicholas Nickleby*. In the early summer he had a cottage at Twickenham Park. In August and September he was again at Broadstairs; and in the late autumn he made another bachelor excursion—Mr. Browne being again his companion—in England, which included his first visit to Stratford-on-Avon and Kenilworth. In February appeared the first number of *Nicholas Nickleby*, on which work he was engaged all through the year, writing each number ready for the following month, and never being in advance, as was his habit with all his other periodical works, until his very latest ones.

The first letter which appears under this date, from Twickenham Park, is addressed to Mr. Thomas Mitton, a school-fellow at one of his earliest schools, and afterwards for some years his solicitor. The letter contains instructions for his first will; the friend of almost his whole life, Mr. John Forster, being appointed executor to this will as he was to the last, to which he was 'called upon to act' only three years before his own death.

The letter which we give in this year to Mr. Justice Tal-



found is, unfortunately, the only one we have been able to procure to that friend, who was, however, one with whom he was most intimately associated, and with whom he maintained a constant correspondence.

The letter beginning 'Respected Sir' was an answer to a little boy (Master Hastings Hughes), who had written to him as *Nicholas Nickleby* approached completion, stating his views and wishes as to the rewards and punishments to be bestowed on the various characters in the book. The letter was sent to him through the Rev. Thomas Barham, author of *The Ingoldsby Legends*.

The two letters to Mr. Macready, at the end of this year, refer to a farce which Charles Dickens wrote, with an idea that it might be suitable for Covent Garden Theatre, then under Mr. Macready's management.

We commence the narrative for this year with a fragment of a diary, which was found amongst some papers which have only recently come to light. We give only those paragraphs which are likely to be of any public interest. The original manuscript has been added to the Forster Collection at the South Kensington Museum.

*Monday, First January, 1838.*

A sad New Year's Day in one respect, for at the opening of last year poor Mary was with us. Very many things to be grateful for since then, however. Increased reputation and means—good health and prospects. We never know the full value of blessings till we lose them (we were not ignorant of this one when we had it, I hope). But if she were with us now, the same winning, happy, amiable companion, sympathising with all my thoughts and feelings more than any one I knew ever did or will, I think I should have nothing to wish for, but a continuance of such happiness. But she is gone, and pray God I may one day, through His mercy, rejoin her. I wrote to Mrs. Hogarth yesterday, taking advantage of the opportunity afforded me by her sending, as a New Year's token, a pen-wiper of poor Mary's, imploring her, as strongly as I could, to think of the many remaining claims upon her affection and exertions, and not

## 16 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

to give way to unavailing grief. Her answer came to-night, and she seems hurt at my doing so—protesting that in all useful respects she is the same as ever. Meant it for the best, and still hope I did right.

*Saturday, Sixth January, 1838.*

Our boy's birthday—one year old. A few people at night—only Forster, the De Gex's, John Ross, Mitton, and the Beards, besides our families—to twelfth-cake and forfeits.

This day last year, Mary and I wandered up and down Holborn and the streets about for hours, looking after a little table for Kate's bedroom, which we bought at last at the very first broker's which we had looked into, and which we had passed half a dozen times because *I didn't like* to ask the price. I took her out to Brompton at night, as we had no place for her to sleep in (the two mothers being with us); she came back again next day to keep house for me, and stopped nearly the rest of the month. I shall never be so happy again as in those chambers three storeys high—never if I roll in wealth and fame. I would hire them to keep empty, if I could afford it.

*Monday, Eighth January, 1838.*

I began the *Sketches of Young Gentlemen* to-day. One hundred and twenty-five pounds for such a little book, without my name to it, is pretty well. This and the *Sunday*<sup>1</sup> by the bye, are the only two things I have not done as Boz.

*Tuesday, Ninth January, 1838.*

Went to the Sun office to insure my life, where the Board seemed disposed to think I work too much. Made Forster and Pickthorn, my Doctor, the references—and after an interesting interview with the Board and the Board's Doctor, came away to work again.

<sup>1</sup> *Sunday under Three Heads*, a small pamphlet published about this time.



*Wednesday, Tenth January, 1838.*

At work all day, and to a quadrille party at night. City people and rather dull. Intensely cold coming home, and vague reports of a fire somewhere. Frederick<sup>1</sup> says the Royal Exchange, at which I sneer most sagely; for—

*Thursday, Eleventh January, 1838.*

To-day the papers are full of it, and it *was* the Royal Exchange, Lloyd's, and all the shops round the building. Called on Browne and went with him to see the ruins, of which we saw as much as we should have done if we had stopped at home.

*Sunday, Fourteenth January, 1838.*

To church in the morning, and when I came home I wrote the preceding portion of this diary, which henceforth I make a steadfast resolution not to neglect, or *paint*. I have not done it yet, nor will I; but say what rises to my lips—my mental lips at least—without reserve. No other eyes will see it, while mine are open in life, and although I dare say I shall be ashamed of a good deal in it, I should like to look over it at the year's end.

In Scott's diary, which I have been looking at this morning, there are thoughts which have been mine by day and by night, in good spirits and bad, since Mary died.

'Another day, and a bright one to the external world again opens on us; the air soft, and the flowers smiling, and the leaves glittering. They cannot refresh her to whom mild weather was a natural enjoyment. Cerements of lead and of wood already hold her; cold earth must have her soon. But it is not . . . (she) who will be laid among the ruins. . . . She is sentient and conscious of my emotions *somewhere*—where, we cannot tell, how, we cannot tell; yet would I not at this moment renounce the mysterious yet certain hope that I shall see her in a better world, for all that this world can give me.

'I have seen her. There is the same symmetry of form,

<sup>1</sup> His brother.

## 18 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

though those limbs are rigid which were once so gracefully elastic; but that yellow masque with pinched features, which seems to mock life rather than emulate it, can it be the face that was once so full of lively expression? I will not look upon it again.'

I know but too well how true all this is.

*Monday, Fifteenth January, 1838.*

Here ends this brief attempt at a diary. I grow sad over this checking off of days, and can't do it.

Greta Bridge, *Thursday, First February, 1838.*

Mrs.  
Charles  
Dickens.

MY DEAREST KATE,—I am afraid you will receive this later than I could wish, as the mail does not come through this place until two o'clock to-morrow morning. However I have availed myself of the very first opportunity of writing, so the fault is that mail's and not this.

We reached Grantham between nine and ten on Thursday night, and found everything prepared for our reception in the very best inn I have ever put up at. It is odd enough that an old lady, who had been outside all day came in towards dinner-time, turned out to be the mistress of a Yorkshire school returning from the holiday stay in London. She was a very queer old lady, and showed us a long letter she was carrying to one of the boys from his father, containing a severe lecture (enforced and aided by many texts of Scripture) on his refusing to eat boiled meat. She was very communicative, drank a great deal of brandy-and-water, and towards evening became insensible, in which state we left her.

Yesterday we were up again shortly after seven A. M., came on upon our journey by the Glasgow mail, which charged us the remarkably low sum of six pounds fare for two places inside. We had a very droll male companion until seven o'clock in the evening, and a most delicious lady's-maid for twenty miles, who implored us to keep a sharp look-out at the coach windows, as she expected the carriage was coming to meet her and she was afraid of missing it. We



had many delightful vauntings of the same kind; but in the end it is scarcely necessary to say that the coach did not come, but a very dirty girl did.

As we came further north the snow grew deeper. About eight o'clock it began to fall heavily, and, as we crossed the wild heaths hereabout, there was no vestige of a track. The mail kept on well, however, and at eleven we reached a bare place with a house, standing alone in the midst of a dreary moor, which the guard informed us was Greta Bridge. I was in a perfect agony of apprehension, for it was fearfully cold, and there were no outward signs of anybody being up in the house. But to our great joy we discovered a comfortable room, with drawn curtains and a most blazing fire. In half an hour they gave us a smoking supper and a bottle of mulled port (in which we drank your health), and then we retired to a couple of capital bedrooms, in each of which there was a rousing fire halfway up the chimney.

We have had for breakfast, toast, cakes, a Yorkshire pie, a piece of beef about the size and much the shape of my portmanteau, tea, coffee, ham and eggs; and are now going to look about us. Having finished our discoveries, we start in a postchaise for Barnard Castle, which is only four miles off, and there I deliver the letter given me by Mitton's friend. All the schools are round about that place, and a dozen old abbeyes besides, which we shall visit by some means or other to-morrow. We shall reach York on Saturday I hope, and (God willing) I trust I shall be at home on Wednesday morning.

I wish you would call on Mrs. Bentley and thank her for the letter; you can tell her when I expect to be in York.

A thousand loves and kisses to the darling boy, whom I see in my mind's eye crawling about the floor of this Yorkshire inn. Bless his heart, I would give two sovereigns for a kiss. Remember me too to Frederick, who I hope is attentive to you.

Is it not extraordinary that the same dreams which have constantly visited me since poor Mary died follow me everywhere? After all the change of scene and fatigue, I have dreamt of her ever since I left home, and no doubt shall till

## 20 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

I return. I should be sorry to lose such visions, for they are very happy ones, if it be only the seeing her in one's sleep. I would fain believe, too, sometimes, that her spirit may have some influence over them, but their perpetual repetition is extraordinary.—Ever, my dear Kate,

Your affectionate Husband.

TWICKENHAM PARK, *Tuesday Night.*

Mr.  
Thomas  
Mitton.

DEAR TOM,—I sat down this morning and put on paper my testamentary meaning. Whether it is sufficiently legal or not is another question, but I hope it is. The rough draft of the clauses which I enclose will be preceded by as much of the fair copy as I send you, and followed by the usual clause about the receipts of the trustees being a sufficient discharge. I also wish to provide that if all our children should die before twenty-one, and Kate married again, half the surplus should go to her and half to my surviving brothers and sisters, share and share alike.

This will be all, except a few lines I wish to add which there will be no occasion to consult you about, as they will merely bear reference to a few tokens of remembrance and one or two slight funeral directions. And so pray God that you may be gray, and Forster bald, long before you are called upon to act as my executors.

Ever yours.

TWICKENHAM PARK, *Sunday, Fifteenth July, 1838.*

Mr.  
Serjeant  
Talfourd,  
M.P.

MY DEAR TALFOURD,—I cannot tell you how much pleasure I have derived from the receipt of your letter. I have heard little of you, and seen less, for so long a time, that your handwriting came like the renewal of some old friendship, and gladdened my eyes like the face of some old friend.

If I hear from Lady Holland before you return, I shall, as in duty bound, present myself at her bidding; but between you and me and the general post, I hope she may not renew her invitation until I can visit her with you, as I would much rather avail myself of your personal introduction. However,



whatever her ladyship may do I shall respond to, and anyway shall be only too happy to avail myself of what I am sure cannot fail to form a very pleasant and delightful introduction.

Your kind invitation and reminder of the subject of a pleasant conversation in one of our pleasant rides, has thrown a gloom over the brightness of Twickenham, for here I am chained. It is indispensably necessary that *Oliver Twist* should be published in three volumes, in September next. I have only just begun the last one, and, having the constant drawback of my monthly work, shall be sadly harassed to get it finished in time, especially as I have several important scenes (important to the story I mean) yet to write. Nothing would give me so much pleasure as to be with you for a week or so. I can only imperfectly console myself with the hope that when you see *Oliver* you will like the close of the book, and approve my self-denial in staying here to write it. I should like to know your address in Scotland when you leave town, so that I may send you the earliest copy if it be produced in the vacation, which I pray Heaven it may.

Meanwhile, believe that though my body is on the banks of the Thames, half my heart is going the Oxford circuit.

Mrs. Dickens and Charley desire their best remembrances (the latter expresses some anxiety, not unmixed with apprehension, relative to the Copyright Bill, in which he conceives himself interested), with hearty wishes that you may have a fine autumn, which is all you want, being sure of all other means of enjoyment that a man can have.—I am, my dear Talfourd,

Ever faithfully yours.

PS.—You know, I suppose, that they elected me at the Athenæum? Pray thank Mr. Serjeant Storks for me.

LION HOTEL, SHREWSBURY, *Thursday, First November, 1838.*

MY DEAREST LOVE,—I received your welcome letter on arriving here last night, and am rejoiced to hear that the dear children are so much better. I hope that in your next, or your next but one, I shall learn

Mrs.  
Charles  
Dickens.

## 22 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

that they are quite well. A thousand kisses to them. I wish I could convey them myself.

We found a roaring fire, an elegant dinner, a snug room, and capital beds all ready for us at Leamington, after a very agreeable (but very cold) ride. We started in a postchaise next morning for Kenilworth, with which we were both enraptured, and where I really think we MUST have lodgings next summer, please God that we are in good health and all goes well. You cannot conceive how delightful it is. To read among the ruins in fine weather would be perfect luxury. From here we went on to Warwick Castle, which is an ancient building, newly restored, and possessing no very great attraction beyond a fine view and some beautiful pictures; and thence to Stratford-upon-Avon, where we sat down in the room where Shakespeare was born, and left our autographs and read those of other people and so forth.

We remained at Stratford all night, and found to our unspeakable dismay that father's plan of proceeding by Bridgenorth was impracticable, as there were no coaches. So we were compelled to come here by way of Birmingham and Wolverhampton, starting at eight o'clock through a cold wet fog, and travelling, when the day had cleared up, through miles of cinder-paths, and blazing furnaces, and roaring steam-engines, and such a mass of dirt, gloom, and misery, as I never before witnessed. We got pretty well accommodated here when we arrived at half-past four, and are now going off in a postchaise to Llangollen—thirty miles—where we shall remain to-night, and where the Bangor mail will take us up to-morrow. Such are our movements up to this point, and when I have received your letter at Chester I shall write to you again and tell you when I shall be back. I can say positively that I shall not exceed the fortnight, and I think it very possible that I may return a day or two before it expires.

We were at the play last night. It was a bespeak—'The Love Chase,' a ballet (with a phenomenon!), divers songs, and 'A Roland for an Oliver.' It is a good theatre, but the actors are very funny. Browne laughed with such indecent heartiness at one point of the entertainment, that an



old gentleman in the next box suffered the most violent indignation. The bespeak party occupied two boxes, the ladies were full-dressed, and the gentlemen, to a man, in white gloves with flowers in their button-holes. It amused us mightily, and was really as like the Miss Snevellicci business as it could well be.

My side has been very bad since I left home, although I have been very careful, remaining to the full as abstemious as usual, and have not eaten any great quantity, having no appetite. I suffered such an ecstasy of pain all night at Stratford that I was half dead yesterday, and was obliged last night to take a dose of henbane. The effect was most delicious. I slept soundly, and without feeling the least uneasiness, and am a great deal better this morning; neither do I find that the henbane has affected my head, which, from the great effect it had upon me—exhilarating me to the most extraordinary degree, and yet keeping me sleepy—I feared it would. If I had not got better I should have turned back to Birmingham, and come straight home by the railroad. As it is, I hope I shall make out the trip.

God bless you, my darling. I long to be back with you again and to see the sweet Babs.

Your faithful and most affectionate Husband.

DOUGHTY STREET, LONDON, *Twelfth December*, 1838.

RESPECTED SIR,—I have given Squeers one cut on the neck and two on the head, at which he appeared much surprised and began to cry, which, being a cowardly thing, is just what I should have expected from him—wouldn't you?

Master  
Hastings  
Hughes.

I have carefully done what you told me in your letter about the lamb and the two 'sheeps' for the little boys. They have also had some good ale and porter, and some wine. I am sorry you didn't say *what* wine you would like them to have. I gave them some sherry which they liked very much, except one boy, who was a little sick and choked a good deal. He was rather greedy, and that's the truth, and I believe it went the wrong way, which I say served him right, and I hope you will say so too.



## 24 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

Nicholas had his roast lamb, as you said he was to, but he could not eat it all, and says if you do not mind his doing so he should like to have the rest hashed to-morrow with some greens, which he is very fond of, and so am I. He said he did not like to have his porter hot, for he thought it spoilt the flavour, so I let him have it cold. You should have seen him drink it. I thought he never would have left off. I also gave him three pounds of money, all in six-pences, to make it seem more, and he said directly that he should give more than half to his mamma and sister, and divide the rest with poor Smike. And I say he is a good fellow for saying so; and if anybody says he isn't I am ready to fight him whenever they like—there!

Fanny Squeers shall be attended to, depend upon it. Your drawing of her is very like, except that I don't think the hair is quite curly enough. The nose is particularly like hers, and so are the legs. She is a nasty disagreeable thing, and I know it will make her very cross when she sees it; and what I say is that I hope it may. You will say the same I know—at least I think you will.

I meant to have written you a long letter, but I cannot write very fast when I like the person I am writing to, because that makes me think about them, and I like you, and so I tell you. Besides, it is just eight o'clock at night, and I always go to bed at eight o'clock, except when it is my birthday, and then I sit up to supper. So I will not say anything more besides this—and that is my love to you and Neptune; and if you will drink my health every Christmas Day I will drink yours—come.—I am, Respected Sir,

Your affectionate Friend.

PS.—I don't write my name very plain, but you know what it is you know, so never mind.

DOUGHTY STREET, *Monday Morning.*

Mr. W. C. Macready. MY DEAR MACREADY,—I have not seen you for the past week, because I hoped when we next met to bring *The Lamplighter* in my hand. It would have been finished by this time, but I found myself compelled to set to work first at the *Nickleby*, on which I am at present

engaged, and which I regret to say—after my close and arduous application last month—I find I cannot write as quickly as usual. I must finish it, at latest, by the 24th (a doubtful comfort!), and the instant I have done so I will apply myself to the farce. I am afraid to name any particular day, but I pledge myself that you shall have it this month, and you may calculate on that promise. I send you with this a copy of a farce I wrote for Harley when he left Drury Lane, and in which he acted for some seventy nights. It is the best thing he does. It is barely possible you might like to try it. Any local or temporary allusions could be easily altered.

Believe me that I only feel gratified and flattered by your inquiry after the farce, and that if I had as much time as I have inclination, I would write on and on and on, farce after farce and comedy after comedy, until I wrote you something that would run. You do me justice when you give me credit for good intentions; but the extent of my good-will and strong and warm interest in you personally and your great undertaking, you cannot fathom nor express.—Believe me, my dear Macready,

Ever faithfully yours.

PS.—For Heaven's sake don't fancy that I hold *The Strange Gentleman* in any estimation or have a wish upon the subject.

48 DOUGHTY STREET, *Thirteenth December*, 1838.

MY DEAR MACREADY,—I can have but one opinion on the subject—withdraw the farce at once, by all means. The same.

I perfectly concur in all you say, and thank you most heartily and cordially for your kind and manly conduct, which is only what I should have expected from you; though, under such circumstances, I sincerely believe there are few but you—if any—who would have adopted it.

Believe me that I have no other feeling of disappointment connected with this matter but that arising from the not having been able to be of some use to you. And trust me that if the opportunity should ever arrive, my ardour will



## 26 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

only be increased—not damped—by the result of this experiment.—Believe me always, my dear Macready,  
Faithfully yours.

1839

### NARRATIVE

CHARLES DICKENS was still living in Doughty Street, but he removed at the end of this year to 1 Devonshire Terrace, Regent's Park. He hired a cottage at Petersham for the summer months, and in the autumn took lodgings at Broadstairs.

The cottage at Alphington, near Exeter, mentioned in the letter to Mr. Mitton, was hired by Charles Dickens for his parents.

He was at work all through this year on *Nicholas Nickleby*.

We have now the commencement of his correspondence with Mr. George Cattermole. His first letter was written immediately after Mr. Cattermole's marriage with Miss Elderton, a distant connection of Charles Dickens; hence the allusions to 'cousin,' which will be found in many of his letters to Mr. Cattermole. The bride and bridegroom were passing their honeymoon in the neighbourhood of Petersham, and the letter refers to a request from them for the loan of some books.

The first letter in this year to Mr. Macready is in answer to one from him, announcing his retirement from the management of Covent Garden Theatre.

We give in this year, two letters to Mr. Laman Blanchard, the well-known writer, for whom Charles Dickens had an affectionate regard. 'Poor Chatfield' mentioned in the first of these letters was a promising young painter, who died very prematurely. It is, perhaps, hardly necessary to explain that 'your son's play' alluded to in the same letter, was the production of a little boy.

The portrait by Mr. Maclise, mentioned to Mr. Harley, was the, now, well-known one, which appeared as a frontispiece to *Nicholas Nickleby*.

The letter to Mr. Edward Chapman was written on the



occasion of Charles Dickens having entered himself to 'eat his dinners' at the Middle Temple, when Mr. Chapman was his 'surety' according to the usual form. Charles Dickens, however, was never 'called' to the Bar. .

DOUGHTY STREET, *Sunday*.

MY DEAR MACREADY,—I ought not to be sorry Mr. W. C. Macready. to hear of your abdication, but I am, notwithstanding, most heartily and sincerely sorry, for my own sake and the sake of thousands, who may now go and whistle for a theatre—at least, such a theatre as you gave them; and I do now in my heart believe that for a long and dreary time that exquisite delight has passed away. If I may jest with my misfortunes, and quote the Portsmouth critic of Mr. Crummles's company, I say that: 'As an exquisite embodiment of the poet's visions and a realisation of human intellectuality, gilding with refulgent light our dreamy moments, and laying open a new and magic world before the mental eye, the drama is gone—perfectly gone.'

With the same perverse and unaccountable feeling which causes a heart-broken man at a dear friend's funeral to see something irresistibly comical in a red-nosed or one-eyed undertaker, I receive your communication with ghostly facetiousness; though on a moment's reflection I find better cause for consolation in the hope that, relieved from your most trying and painful duties, you will now have leisure to return to pursuits more congenial to your mind and to move more easily and pleasantly among your friends. In the long catalogue of the latter, I believe that there is not one prouder of the name, or more grateful for the store of delightful recollections you have enabled him to heap up from boyhood, than, my dear Macready, Yours always faithfully.

48 DOUGHTY STREET, *Sunday Morning*.<sup>1</sup>

MY DEAR BLANCHARD,—I have booked you— Mr. Laman Blanchard. one inside—for the fly to Ainsworth's, wherein all available places are now secured. As we have one Mr.

<sup>1</sup> Printed in *The Poetical Works of Laman Blanchard*, with a Memoir, by Blanchard Jerrold.

## 28 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

Lover,<sup>1</sup> of Charles Street, Middlesex Hospital, in the way-bill, and the gen'l'm'n is to be took up at his own door, I must trouble you to have your luggage ready at the 'Courier Office' at a quarter-past five.

I am writing to you with a sad heart, for I have just indited a few lines to poor Chatfield, to whom I should have written long since but for Forster's assurance that it would be better not. I do not like to break in upon him without notice, but I have told him that you gave me reason to hope he would not be displeased to see me, and that if the changes of sickness leave him in the same mood I will see him on Christmas Morning (alas, poor fellow! a merry time to us), at two o'clock. I was very much obliged indeed to you for the paper. I was not aware of the quotation, and was greatly amused with the 'leader.' It seemed to me exceedingly happy, terse, pointed, smart, and quite an off (hand) leader in short. I have been amused beyond all telling with your son's play, in which the rival kings talk a great deal more common-sense than any stage-kings I have ever known. I suppose its excessive length is an insuperable objection to its representation at Covent Garden—even if the character of Stephen were not an insuperable objection with Macready, who could never stand Anderson in such a part as that.—  
My dear Blanchard, Always faithfully yours.

48 DOUGHTY STREET, LONDON, *thirty-first January*, 1839.

Mr. W. L.  
Sammons.

SIR,—Circumstances have enabled me to relinquish my old connection with the *Miscellany*<sup>2</sup> at an earlier period than I had expected. I am no longer its editor, but I have referred your paper to my successor, and marked it as one 'requiring attention.' I have no doubt it will receive it.

With reference to your letter bearing date on the Eighth of last October, let me assure you that I have delayed answering it—not because a constant stream of similar epistles has rendered me callous to the anxieties of a beginner, in those

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Samuel Lover, the Irish writer and composer.

<sup>2</sup> *Bentley's Miscellany*.



doubtful paths in which I walk myself—but because you ask me to do that which I would scarce do, of my own unsupported opinion, for my own child, supposing I had one old enough to require such a service. To suppose that I could gravely take upon myself the responsibility of withdrawing you from pursuits you have already undertaken, or urging you on in a most uncertain and hazardous course of life, is really a compliment to my judgment and inflexibility which I cannot recognise and do not deserve (or desire). I hoped that a little reflection would show you how impossible it is that I could be expected to enter upon a task of so much delicacy, but as you have written to me since, and called (unfortunately at a period when I am obliged to seclude myself from all-comers), I am compelled at last to tell you that I can do nothing of the kind.

If it be any satisfaction to you to know that I have read what you sent me, and read it with great pleasure, though, as you treat of local matters, I am necessarily in the dark here and there, I can give you the assurance very sincerely. With this, and many thanks to you for your obliging expressions towards myself, I am, Sir,

Your very obedient Servant.

DOUGHTY STREET, *Thursday Morning*.<sup>1</sup>

MY DEAR HARLEY,—This is my birthday. Mr. J. P.  
Harley.  
Many happy returns of the day to you and me.

I took it into my head yesterday to get up an impromptu dinner on this auspicious occasion—only my own folks, Leigh Hunt, Ainsworth, and Forster. I know you can't dine here in consequence of the tempestuous weather on the Covent Garden shores, but if you will come in when you have done Trinculizing, you will delight me greatly, and add in no inconsiderable degree to the 'conviviality' of the meeting.

Lord bless my soul! Twenty-seven years old. Who'd have thought it? I *never* did!

But I grow sentimental.

Always yours truly.

<sup>1</sup> No other date, but it must have been Seventh February, 1839.



## 30 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

NEW LONDON INN, EXETER.  
*Wednesday Morning, Sixth March, 1839.*

Mr. Thomas  
Mitton.

DEAR TOM,—Perhaps you have heard from Kate that I succeeded yesterday in the very first walk, and took a cottage at a place called Alphington, one mile from Exeter, which contains, on the ground-floor, a good parlour and kitchen, and above, a full-sized country drawing-room and three bedrooms; in the yard behind, coal-holes, fowl-houses, and meat-safes out of number; in the kitchen, a neat little range; in the other rooms, good stoves and cupboards; and all for twenty pounds a year, taxes included. There is a good garden at the side well stocked with cabbages, beans, onions, celery, and some flowers. The stock belonging to the landlady (who lives in the adjoining cottage), there was some question whether she was not entitled to half the produce, but I settled the point by paying five shillings, and becoming absolute master of the whole!

I do assure you that I am charmed with the place and the beauty of the country round about, though I have not seen it under very favourable circumstances, for it snowed when I was there this morning, and blew bitterly from the east yesterday. It is really delightful, and when the house is to rights and the furniture all in, I shall be quite sorry to leave it. I have had some few things, second-hand, but I take it seventy pounds will be the mark, even taking this into consideration. I include in that estimate glass and crockery, garden tools, and such like-little things. There is a spare bedroom of course. That I have furnished too.

I am on terms of the closest intimacy with Mrs. Samuell, the landlady, and her brother and sister-in-law, who have a little farm hard by. They are capital specimens of country folks, and I really think the old woman herself will be a great comfort to my mother. Coals are dear just now—twenty-six shillings a ton. They found me a boy to go two miles out and back again to order some this morning. I was debating in my mind whether I should give him eighteen-pence or two shillings, when his fee was announced—two-pence!

The house is on the high-road to Plymouth, and, though in the very heart of Devonshire, there is as much long-stage and posting life as you would find in Piccadilly. The situation is charming. Meadows in front, an orchard running parallel to the garden hedge, richly-wooded hills closing in the prospect behind, and, away to the left, before a splendid view of the hill on which Exeter is situated, the cathedral towers rising up into the sky in the most picturesque manner possible. I don't think I ever saw so cheerful or pleasant a spot. The drawing-room is nearly, if not quite, as large as the outer room of my old chambers in Furnival's Inn. The paint and paper are new, and the place clean as the utmost excess of snowy cleanliness can be.

You would laugh if you could see me powdering away with the upholsterer, and endeavouring to bring about all sorts of impracticable reductions and wonderful arrangements. He has by him two second-hand carpets; the important ceremony of trying the same comes off at three this afternoon. I am perpetually going backwards and forwards. It is two miles from here, so I have plenty of exercise, which so occupies me and prevents my being lonely that I stopped at home to read last night, and shall to-night, although the theatre is open. Charles Kean has been the star for the last two evenings. He was stopping in this house, and went away this morning. I have got his sitting-room now, which is smaller and more comfortable than the one I had before.

You will have heard perhaps that I wrote to my mother to come down to-morrow. There are so many things she can make comfortable at a much less expense than I could, that I thought it best. If I had not, I could not have returned on Monday, which I now hope to do, and to be in town at half-past eight.

Will you tell my father that if he could devise any means of bringing him down, I think it would be a great thing for him to have Dash, if it be only to keep down the trampers and beggars.

. . . . .



## 32 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

ELM COTTAGE, PETERSHAM, *Wednesday Morning.*

Mr. George  
Cattermole.

MY DEAR CATTERMOLE,—Why is *Peveril* lingering on dusty shelves in town, while my fair cousin and your fair bride remains in blissful ignorance of his merits? There he is, I grieve to say, but there he shall not be long, for I shall be visiting my other home on Saturday morning, and will bring him bodily down and forward him the moment he arrives.

Not having many of my books here, I don't find any among them which I think more suitable to your purpose than a carpet-bagful sent herewith, containing the Italian and German novelists (convenient as being easily taken up and laid down again; and I suppose you won't read long at a sitting), Leigh Hunt's *Indicator* and *Companion* (which have the same merit), *Hood's Own* (complete), *A Legend of Montrose*, and *Kenilworth*, which I have just been reading with greater delight than ever, and so I suppose everybody else must be equally interested in. I have Goldsmith, Swift, Fielding, Smollett, and the British Essayists 'handy'; and I need not say that you have them on hand too, if you like.

You know all I would say from my heart and soul on the auspicious event of yesterday; but you don't know what I could say about the delightful recollections I have of your 'good lady's' charming looks and bearing, upon which I discoursed most eloquently here last evening, and at considerable length. As I am crippled in this respect, however, by the suspicion that possibly she may be looking over your shoulder while you read this note (I would lay a moderate wager that you have looked round twice or thrice already), I shall content myself with saying that I am ever heartily,  
my dear Cattermole,

Hers and yours.

ELM COTTAGE, PETERSHAM, NEAR RICHMOND,  
*Twenty-eighth June, 1839.*

Mr. J. P.  
Harley.

MY DEAR HARLEY,—I have 'left my home,' and been here ever since the end of April, and shall remain here most probably until the end of September, which is the reason that we have been such strangers of late.

I am very sorry to say that I cannot dine with you on



Sunday, but some people are coming here, and I cannot get away. Better luck next time, I hope.

I was on the point of writing to you when your note came, to ask you if you would come down here next Saturday—to-morrow week, I mean—and stop till Monday. I will either call for you at the theatre at any time you name, or send for you, 'punctual,' and have you brought down. Can you come if it's fine? Say yes, like a good fellow as you are, and say it per post.

I have countermanded that face. Maclise made another face of me, which all people say is astonishing. The engraving will be ready soon, and I would rather you had that, as I am sure you would if you had seen it.

Faithfully Yours.

DOUGHTY STREET, *Monday Morning.*

MY DEAR SIR,—On Friday I have a family dinner at home—uncles, aunts, brothers, sisters, <sup>Mr.</sup> William Longman, cousins—an annual gathering.

By what fatality is it that you always ask me to dine on the wrong day?

While you are tracing this non-consequence to its cause, I wish you would tell Mr. Sydney Smith that of all the men I ever heard of and never saw, I have the greatest curiosity to see and the greatest interest to know him.

Begging my best compliments at home, I am, my dear Sir,  
Faithfully yours.

ELM COTTAGE, PETERSHAM, *Thursday Night, Thirteenth July, 1839.*

MY DEAR BLANCHARD,—Living in these remote <sup>Mr. Laman</sup> and distant parts, with the chain of mountains <sup>Blanchard.</sup> formed by Richmond Hill presenting an almost insurmountable barrier between me and the busy world, I know no more than that there is to be a dinner to Macready on Saturday week, and that I am a steward. But I shall be in town and at the theatre on Tuesday night. You will be there too, no doubt? In the proscenium-box on the Bow Street side I will hold further converse with you when the play is over; and if I have gained no further information by that time I

## 34 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

will procure it for you next morning, and I have little doubt that I can 'do your business' both ways. Macready has, as Talfourd remarked in one of his speeches, 'cast a new grace round joy and gladness, and rendered mirth more holy!' Therefore are we preparing crowns and wreaths here, to shower upon the stage when that sad curtain falls and kivers up Shakespeare for years to come. I try to make a joke of it, but, upon my word, when the night comes I verily believe I shall cry.

I am very glad to read what you say about Nicholas. It is very difficult, indeed, to wind up so many people in 'parts,' and make each part tell by itself, but I hope to go out with flying colours notwithstanding. I have been at work all day, so if this note is illegible it's not my fault, but number seventeen's, which is yet an infant.—Always believe me, my dear Blanchard,  
Faithfully yours.

PETERSHAM, *Twenty-sixth July*, 1839.

Mr. W. C. Macready. MY DEAR MACREADY,—Fix your visit for whenever you please. It can never give us anything but delight to see you, and it is better to look forward to such a pleasure than to look back upon it, as the last gratification is enjoyable all our lives, and the first for a few short stages in the journey.

I feel more true and cordial pleasure than I can express to you in the request you have made. Anything which can serve to commemorate our friendship and to keep the recollection of it alive among our children is, believe me, and ever will be, most deeply prized by me. I accept the office with hearty and fervent satisfaction; and, to render this pleasant bond between us the more complete, I must solicit you to become godfather to the last and final branch of a genteel small family of three which I am told may be looked for in that auspicious month when Lord Mayors are born and guys prevail. This I look upon as a bargain between us, and I have shaken hands with you in spirit upon it. Family topics remind me of Mr. Kenwigs. As the weather is wet, and he is about to make his last appearance on my little



stage, I send Mrs. Macready an early proof of the next number, containing an account of his baby's progress.

I am going to send you something else on Monday—a tragedy. Don't be alarmed. I didn't write it, nor do I want it acted. A young Scotch lady whom I don't know (but she is evidently very intelligent and accomplished) has sent me a translation of a German play, soliciting my aid and advice in the matter of its publication. Among a crowd of Germanisms, there are many things in it which are so very striking, that I am sure it will amuse you very much. At least I think it will; it has me. I am going to send it back to her—when I come to Elstree will be time enough; and meantime, if you bestow a couple of hours upon it, you will not think them thrown away.

It's a large parcel, and I must keep it here till somebody goes up to town and can book it by the coach. I warrant it, large as it looks, readable in two hours; and I very much want to know what you think of the first act, and especially the opening, which seems to me quite famous. The metre is very odd and rough, but now and then there's a wildness in it which helps the thing very much; and altogether it has left a something on my mind which I can't get rid of.—My dear Macready,

Faithfully and truly yours.

40 ALBION STREET, BROADSTAIRS, *Twenty-first September, 1839.*

MY DEAR MACREADY,—Let me prefix to the <sup>Mr. W. C.</sup> last number of *Nickleby*, and to the book, a <sup>Macready.</sup> duplicate of the leaf which I now send you. Believe me that there will be no leaf in the volume which will afford me in times to come more true pleasure and gratification, than that in which I have written your name as foremost amongst those of the friends whom I love and honour. Believe me, there will be no one line in it conveying a more honest truth or a more sincere feeling than that which describes its dedication to you as a slight token of my admiration and regard.

So let me tell the world by this frail record that I was a friend of yours, and interested to no ordinary extent in your proceedings at that interesting time when you showed them



## 36 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

such noble truths in such noble forms, and gave me a new interest in, and associations with, the labours of so many months.

I write to you very hastily and crudely, for I have been very hard at work, having only finished to-day, and my head spins yet. But you know what I mean.—I am then always, believe me, my dear Macready, Faithfully yours.

PS.—(Proof of Dedication enclosed): ‘To W. C. Macready, Esq., the following pages are inscribed, as a slight token of admiration and regard, by his friend, the Author.’

DOUGHTY STREET, *Friday Night, Twenty-fifth October, 1839.*

Mr. W. C. Macready. MY DEAR MACREADY,—The book, the whole book, and nothing but the book (except the binding, which is an important item), has arrived at last, and is forwarded herewith. The red represents my blushes at its gorgeous dress; the gilding, all those bright professions which I do not make to you; and the book itself, my whole heart for twenty months, which should be yours for so short a term, as you have it always.—Believe me, my dear Macready, Your faithful Friend.

DOUGHTY STREET, *Thursday, Fourteenth November, 1839.*

The same. MY DEAR MACREADY,—Tom Landseer—that is, the deaf one whom everybody quite loves for his sweet nature under a most deplorable infirmity—Tom Landseer asked me if I would present to you from him the accompanying engraving, which he has executed from a picture by his brother Edwin; submitting it to you as a little tribute from an unknown but ardent admirer of your genius, which speaks to his heart, although it does not find its way there through his ears. I readily undertook the task and send it herewith.

I urged him to call upon you with me and proffer it boldly; but he is a very modest and delicately-minded creature, and was shy of intruding. If you thank him through me, per-

haps you will say something about my bringing him to call, and so gladden the gentle artist and make him happy.

You must come and see my new house when we have it to rights. By Christmas Day we shall be, I hope, your neighbours.—Ever believe me, dear Macready,

Faithfully yours.

I DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Twenty-seventh December, 1839.*

MY DEAR SIR,—The place where you pledge Mr. Edward  
Chapman. yourself to pay for my beef and mutton when I eat it, and my ale and wine when I drink it, is the Treasurer's Office of the Middle Temple, the new building at the bottom of Middle Temple on the right-hand side. You walk up into the first-floor and say (boldly) that you come to sign Mr. Charles Dickens' bond—which is already signed by Mr. Serjeant Talfourd. I suppose I should formally acquaint you that I have paid the fees, and that the responsibility you incur is a very slight one—extending very little beyond my good behaviour, and honorable intentions to pay for all wine-glasses, tumblers, or other dinner-furniture that I may break or damage.

I wish you would do me another service, and that is to choose, at the place you told me of, a reasonable copy of *The Beauties of England and Wales*. You can choose it quite as well as I can, or better, and I shall be much obliged to you. I should like you to send it at once, as I am diving into all kinds of matters at odd minutes with a view to our forthcoming operations.

The Brigand <sup>1</sup> is sleeping, but I suspect with one eye open. Whether he is ogling the Vice-Chancellor with it, or not, time will show.

Will you mention to your book-keeper, that in case he should meet a Fair Copy of our accounts, walking about anywhere, I shall be glad if he will give her my compliments, and say she may rely upon a welcome, whenever she is disposed to come towards this end of the town?

Best remembrances to Mr. Hall.

Always faithfully yours.

<sup>1</sup> The baby.



1840

## NARRATIVE

CHARLES DICKENS was at Broadstairs with his family for the autumn months. During all this year he was busily engaged with the periodical entitled *Master Humphrey's Clock*, in which the story of *The Old Curiosity Shop* subsequently appeared. Nearly all the letters to Mr. George Cattermole refer to the illustrations for this story.

The letter dated March 9th alludes to short papers written for *Master Humphrey's Clock* prior to the commencement of *The Old Curiosity Shop*.

Mr. H. G. Adams was the Honorary Secretary of the Chatham Mechanics' Institute, which office he held for many years. The 'local magazine' mentioned in the letter to him was called the *Kentish Coronal*.

We have in this year Charles Dickens' first letter to Mr. Daniel Maclise, this and one other being, unfortunately, the only letters we have been able to obtain addressed to this much-loved friend and most intimate companion.

Mr. Thompson was an intimate friend of Charles Dickens, and was afterwards the father of the celebrated artist, Elizabeth Thompson, now Lady Butler.

1 DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, Monday, Thirteenth January, 1840.

Mr. George Cattermole.      MY DEAR CATTERMOLE,—I am going to propound a mightily grave matter to you. My new periodical work appears—or I should rather say the first number does—on Saturday, the 28th of March; and as it has to be sent to America and Germany, and must therefore be considerably in advance, it is now in hand; I having in fact begun it on Saturday last. Instead of being published in monthly parts at a shilling each only, it will be published in weekly parts at threepence and monthly parts at a shilling; my object being to baffle the imitators and make it as novel as possible. The plan is a new one—I mean the plan of the fiction—and it will comprehend a great



variety of tales. The title is: *Master Humphrey's Clock*.

Now, among other improvements, I have turned my attention to the illustrations, meaning to have woodcuts dropped into the text and no separate plates. I want to know whether you would object to make me a little sketch for a woodcut—in indian-ink would be quite sufficient—about the size of the enclosed scrap; the subject, an old quaint room with antique Elizabethan furniture, and in the chimney-corner an extraordinary old clock—the clock belonging to Master Humphrey, in fact, and no figures. This I should drop into the text at the head of my opening page.

I want to know besides—as Chapman and Hall are my partners in the matter, there need be no delicacy about my asking or your answering the question—what would be your charge for such a thing, and whether (if the work answers our expectations) you would like to repeat the joke at regular intervals, and if so, on what terms? I should tell you that I intend to ask Maclise<sup>1</sup> to join me likewise, and that the copying the drawing on wood and the cutting will be done in first-rate style. We are justified by past experience in supposing that the sale would be enormous, and the popularity very great; and when I explain to you the notes I have in my head, I think you will see that it opens a vast number of very good subjects.

I want to talk the matter over with you, and wish you would fix your own time and place—either here or at your house or at the Athenæum, though this would be the best place, because I have my papers about me. If you would take a chop with me, for instance, on Tuesday or Wednesday, I could tell you more in two minutes than in twenty letters, albeit I have endeavoured to make this as business-like and stupid as need be.

Of course all these tremendous arrangements are as yet a profound secret, or there would be fifty Humphreys in the field. So write me a line like a worthy gentleman, and convey my best remembrances to your worthy lady.—Believe me always, my dear Cattermole,

Faithfully yours.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Maclise, however, did not join in this undertaking. Mr. Cattermole's fellow-illustrator was Mr. Hablôt K. Browne.

## 40 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Tuesday Afternoon.*

Mr. George Cattermole. MY DEAR CATTERMOLE,—I think the drawing most famous, and so do the publishers, to whom I sent it to-day. If Browne should suggest anything for the future which may enable him to do you justice, in copying (on which point he is very anxious), I will communicate it to you. It has occurred to me that perhaps you will like to see his copy on the block before it is cut, and I have therefore told Chapman and Hall to forward it to you.

In future, I will take care that you have the number to choose your subject from. I ought to have done so perhaps, in this case; but I was very anxious that you should do the room.

Faithfully yours always.

1 DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, YORK GATE, REGENT'S PARK,  
*Saturday, Eighteenth January, 1840.*

Mr. G. H. Adams. DEAR SIR,—The pressure of other engagements will, I am compelled to say, prevent me from contributing a paper to your new local magazine. But I beg you to set me down as a subscriber to it, and foremost among those whose best wishes are enlisted in your cause. It will afford me real pleasure to hear of your success, for I have many happy recollections connected with Kent, and am scarcely less interested in it than if I had been a Kentish man bred and born, and had resided in the county all my life.

Faithfully yours.

1 DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Monday, Ninth March, 1840.*

Mr. George Cattermole. MY DEAR CATTERMOLE,—I have been induced, on looking over the works of the *Clock*, to make a slight alteration in their disposal, by virtue of which the story about 'John Podgers' will stand over for some little time, and that short tale will occupy its place which you have already by you, and which treats of the assassination of a young gentleman under circumstances of peculiar aggravation. I shall be greatly obliged to you if you will turn your attention to this last morsel as the feature of No. 3, and still more if you can stretch a point with regard to time (which is of the last importance just now), and make



a subject out of it, rather than find one in it. I would neither have made this alteration nor have troubled you about it, but for weighty and cogent reasons which I feel very strongly, and into the composition of which caprice or fastidiousness has no part.

I should tell you perhaps, with reference to Chapman and Hall, that they will never trouble you (as they never trouble me) but when there is real and pressing occasion, and that their representations in this respect, unlike those of most men of business, are to be relied upon.

I cannot tell you how admirably I think Master Humphrey's room comes out, or what glowing accounts I hear of the second design you have done. I had not the faintest anticipation of anything so good—taking into account the material and the despatch.—Believe me, dear Cattermole,

Heartily yours.

PS.—The new (No. 3) tale begins: 'I hold a lieutenant's commission in his Majesty's Army, and served abroad in the campaigns of 1677 and 1678.' It has at present no title.

1 DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, YORK GATE, REGENT'S PARK.  
LONDON, *Tenth March*, 1840.

MY DEAR SIR,—I will not attempt to tell you <sup>Mr. S. A. Dietzman.</sup> how much gratified I have been by the receipt of your first English letter; nor can I describe to you with what delight and gratification I learn that I am held in such high esteem by your great countryman, whose favourable appreciation is flattering indeed.

To you, who have undertaken the laborious (and often, I fear, very irksome) task of clothing me in the German garb, I owe a long arrear of thanks. I wish you would come to England, and afford me an opportunity of slightly reducing the account.

It is with great regret that I have to inform you, in reply to the request contained in your pleasant communication, that my publishers have already made such arrangements and are in possession of such stipulations relative to the proof-



## 42 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

sheets of my new works, that I have no power to send them out of England. If I had, I need not tell you what pleasure it would afford me to promote your views.

I am too sensible of the trouble you must have already had with my writings to impose upon you now a long letter. I will only add, therefore, that I am, my dear Sir, with great sincerity,  
Faithfully yours.

BROADSTAIRS, *Second June, 1840.*

MY DEAR MACLISE,

Mr. Daniel  
Maclise,  
R. A.

My foot is in the house,  
My bath is on the sea,  
And, before I take a souse,  
Here's a single note to thee.

It merely says that the sea is in a state of extraordinary sublimity; that this place is, as the Guide Book most justly observes, 'unsurpassed for the salubrity of the refreshing breezes, which are wafted on the ocean's pinions from far-distant shores.' That we are all right after the perils and voyages of yesterday. That the sea is rolling away in front of the window at which I indite this epistle, and that everything is as fresh and glorious as fine weather and a splendid coast can make it. Bear these recommendations in mind, and shunning Talfourdian pledges, come to the bower which is shaded for you in the one-pair front, where no chair or table has four legs of the same length, and where no drawers will open till you have pulled the pegs off, and then they keep open and won't shut again.

COME!

I can no more.

Always faithfully yours.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Tuesday, Fifteenth December, 1840.*

Mr. T. J.  
Thompson.

MY DEAR THOMPSON,—I have received a most flattering message from the head turnkey of the jail this morning, intimating that 'there warn't a genelman in all London he'd be gladder to show his babies to, than Muster Dickins, and let him come wenever he would to that

shop he was welcome.' But as the Governor (who is a very nice fellow and a gentleman) is not at home this morning, and furthermore as the morning itself has rather gone out of town in respect of its poetical allurements, I think we had best postpone our visit for a day or two.

Faithfully yours.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Twenty-first December.*

MY DEAR GEORGE,—Kit, the single gentleman, and Mr. Garland go down to the place where the child is, and arrive there at night. There has been a fall of snow. Kit, leaving them behind, runs to the old house, and, with a lanthorn in one hand and the bird in its cage in the other, stops for a moment at a little distance with a natural hesitation before he goes up to make his presence known. In a window—supposed to be that of the child's little room—a light is burning, and in that room the child (unknown, of course, to her visitors, who are full of hope) lies dead.

If you have any difficulty about Kit, never mind about putting him in.

Faithfully always.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Friday Morning.*

MY DEAR CATTERMOLLE,—I sent the MS. of the enclosed proof, marked 2, up to Chapman and Hall, from Devonshire, mentioning a subject of an old gateway, which I had put in expressly with a view to your illustrious pencil. By a mistake, however, it went to Browne instead. Chapman is out of town, and such things have gone wrong in consequence.

The subject to which I wish to call your attention is in an unwritten number to follow this one, but it is a mere echo of what you will find at the conclusion of this proof marked 2. I want the cart, gaily decorated, going through the street of the old town with the wax brigand displayed to fierce advantage, and the child seated in it also dispersing bills. As many flags and inscriptions about Jarley's Wax Work fluttering from the cart as you please. You know the wax brigands, and how they contemplate small oval



## 44 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

miniatures? That's the figure I want. I send you the scrap of MS. which contains the subject.

Will you, when you have done this, send it with all speed to Chapman and Hall, as we are mortally pressed for time, and I must go hard to work to make up for what I have lost by being dutiful and going to see my father.

I want to see you about a frontispiece to our first *Clock* volume, which will come out (I think) at the end of September, and about other matters. When shall we meet, and where?

Could you dine with us on Sunday, at six o'clock sharp? I'd come and fetch you in the morning, and we could take a ride and walk. We shall be quite alone, unless Macready comes. What say you?

Don't forget despatch, there's a dear fellow, and ever believe me,  
Heartily yours.

*Twenty-second December, 1840.*

Mr. George Cattermole. DEAR GEORGE,—The child lying dead in the little sleeping-room, which is behind the open screen. It is winter time, so there are no flowers; but upon her breast and pillow, and about her bed, there may be strips of holly and berries, and such free green things. Window overgrown with ivy. The little boy who had that talk with her about angels may be by the bedside, if you like it so; but I think it will be quieter and more peaceful if she is quite alone. I want it to express the most beautiful repose and tranquillity, and to have something of a happy look, if death can.

### 2

The child has been buried inside the church, and the old man, who cannot be made to understand that she is dead, repairs to the grave and sits there all day long, waiting for her arrival, to begin another journey. His staff and knapsack, her little bonnet and basket, etc., lie beside him. 'She'll come to-morrow,' he says when it gets dark, and goes sorrowfully home. I think an hour-glass running out would help

the notion; perhaps her little things upon his knee, or in his hand.

I am breaking my heart over this story, and cannot bear to finish it.

Ever and always heartily.

1841

#### NARRATIVE

IN the summer of this year Charles Dickens made, accompanied by Mrs. Dickens, his first visit to Scotland, and was received in Edinburgh with the greatest enthusiasm.

He was at Broadstairs with his family for the autumn, and at the close of the year he went to Windsor for change of air after a serious illness.

On the Seventeenth of January *The Old Curiosity Shop* was finished. In the following week the first number of his story of *Barnaby Rudge* appeared, in *Master Humphrey's Clock*, and the last number of this story was written at Windsor, in November of this year.

We have the first letters to his dear and valued friends the Rev. William Harness and Mr. Harrison Ainsworth. Also his first letter to Mr. Monckton Milnes (now Lord Houghton).

The letter marked 'Anonymous,' on the character of Oliver Twist, was written to a dissenting minister, who had been himself a workhouse boy.

Of the letter to Mr. John Tomlin we can only remark, that it was published in an American magazine, edited by Mr. Edgar Poe, in the year 1842.

'The New First Rate' (first letter to Mr. Harrison Ainsworth) must, we think, be an allusion to the outside cover of *Bentley's Miscellany*, which first appeared in this year, and of which Mr. Ainsworth was editor.

The two letters to Mr. Lovejoy are in answer to a requisition from the people of Reading that Charles Dickens would represent them in Parliament.

The letter to Mr. George Cattermole (Twenty-sixth June)



refers to a dinner given to Charles Dickens by the people of Edinburgh, on his first visit to that city.

The 'poor Overs' mentioned in the letter to Mr. Macready of Twenty-fourth August, was a carpenter dying of consumption, to whom Dr. Elliotson had shown extraordinary kindness. 'When poor Overs was dying' (wrote Charles Dickens to Mr. Forster), 'he suddenly asked for a pen and ink and some paper, and made up a little parcel for me, which it was his last conscious act to direct. She (his wife) told me this, and gave it me. I opened it last night. It was a copy of his little book, in which he had written my name, "with his devotion." I thought it simple and affecting of the poor fellow.'

The letter to Mrs. Hogarth was written on the occasion of the sudden death of her son George.

'The Saloon,' alluded to in the last letter of this year, was an institution at Drury Lane Theatre during Mr. Macready's management. The original purpose for which this saloon was established having become perverted and degraded, Charles Dickens had it much at heart to remodel and improve it. Hence this letter to Mr. Macready.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Saturday Morning, Second January, 1841.*

Rev.  
William  
Harness.

MY DEAR HARNESS,—I should have been very glad to join your pleasant party, but all next week I shall be laid up with a broken heart, for I must occupy myself in finishing the *Curiosity Shop*, and it is such a painful task to me that I must concentrate myself upon it tooth and nail, and go out nowhere until it is done.

I have delayed answering your kind note in a vague hope of being heart-whole again by the seventh. The present state of my work, however (Christmas not being a very favourable season for making progress in such doings), assures me that this cannot be, and that I must heroically deny myself the pleasure you offer.—Always believe me,

Faithfully yours.

# TO GEORGE CATTERMOLÉ

47

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Thursday, Fourteenth January, 1841.*

MY DEAR CATTERMOLÉ,—I cannot tell you <sup>Mr. George Cattermole.</sup> how much obliged I am to you for altering the child, or how much I hope that my wish in that respect didn't go greatly against the grain.

I saw the old inn this morning. Words cannot say how good it is. I can't bear the thought of its being cut, and should like to frame and glaze it in *statu quo* for ever and ever.

Will you do a little tail-piece for the *Curiosity* story?—only one figure if you like—giving some notion of the etherealised spirit of the child; something like those little figures in the frontispiece. If you will, and can despatch it at once, you will make me happy.

I am, for the time being, nearly dead with work and grief for the loss of my child.—Always, my dear George,

Heartily yours.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Thursday Night, Twenty-eighth January, 1841.*

MY DEAR GEORGE,—I sent to Chapman and Hall yesterday morning about the second subject <sup>The same.</sup> for No. 2 of *Barnaby*, but found they had sent it to Browne.

The first subject of No. 3 I will either send to you on Saturday, or, at latest, on Sunday morning. I have also directed Chapman and Hall to send you proofs of what has gone before, for reference, if you need it.

I want to know whether you feel ravens in general and would fancy Barnaby's raven in particular. Barnaby being an idiot, my notion is to have him always in company with a pet raven, who is immeasurably more knowing than himself. To this end I have been studying my bird, and think I could make a very queer character of him. Should you like the subject when this raven makes his first appearance?

Faithfully yours.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Saturday Evening, Thirtieth January, 1841.*

MY DEAR GEORGE,—I send you the first four <sup>The same.</sup> slips of No. 48, containing the description of the locksmith's house, which I think will make a good subject,



## 48 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

and one you will like. If you put the 'prentice' in it, show nothing more than his paper cap, because he will be an important character in the story, and you will need to know more about him as he is minutely described. I may as well say that he is very short. Should you wish to put the locksmith in, you will find him described in No. 2 of *Barnaby* (which I told Chapman and Hall to send you). Browne has done him in one little thing, but so very slightly that you will not require to see his sketch, I think.

Now, I must know what you think about the raven, my buck; I otherwise am in this fix. I have given Browne no subject for this number, and time is flying. If you would like to have the raven's first appearance, and don't object to having both subjects, so be it. I shall be delighted. If otherwise, I must feed that hero forthwith.

I cannot close this hasty note, my dear fellow, without saying that I have deeply felt your hearty and most invaluable co-operation in the beautiful illustrations you have made for the last story, that I look at them with a pleasure I cannot describe to you in words, and that it is impossible for me to say how sensible I am of your earnest and friendly aid. Believe me that this is the very first time any designs for what I have written have touched and moved me, and caused me to feel that they expressed the idea I had in my mind.

I am most sincerely and affectionately grateful to you, and am full of pleasure and delight.—Believe me, my dear Cattermole,

Always heartily yours.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Tuesday, Ninth February.*

Mr. George  
Cattermole.

MY DEAR GEORGE,—My notes tread upon each other's heels. In my last I quite forgot business.

Will you, for No. 49, do the locksmith's house, which was described in No. 48? I mean the outside. If you can, without hurting the effect, shut up the shop as though it were night, so much the better. Should you want a figure, an ancient watchman in or out of his box, very sleepy, will be just the thing for me.

I have written to Chapman and requested him to send you a block of a long shape, so that the house may come upright as it were.

Faithfully ever.

1 DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, YORK GATE, REGENT'S PARK.  
LONDON, *Tuesday, Twenty-third February, 1841.*

DEAR SIR,—You are quite right in feeling <sup>Mr. John Tomlin.</sup> assured that I should answer the letter you have addressed to me. If you had entertained a presentiment that it would afford me sincere pleasure and delight to hear from a warm-hearted and admiring reader of my books in the backwoods of America, you would not have been far wrong.

I thank you cordially and heartily both for your letter and its kind and courteous terms. To think that I have awakened a fellow-feeling and sympathy with the creatures of many thoughtful hours among the vast solitudes in which you dwell, is a source of the purest delight and pride to me; and believe me that your expressions of affectionate remembrance and approval, sounding from the green forests on the banks of the Mississippi, sink deeper into my heart and gratify it more than all the honorary distinctions that all the courts in Europe could confer.

It is such things as these that make one hope one does not live in vain, and that are the highest reward of an author's life. To be numbered among the household gods of one's distant countrymen, and associated with their homes and quiet pleasures; to be told that in each nook and corner of the world's great mass there lives one well-wisher who holds communion with one in the spirit, is a worthy fame indeed, and one which I would not barter for a mine of wealth.

That I may be happy enough to cheer some of your leisure hours for a very long time to come, and to hold a place in your pleasant thoughts, is the earnest wish of 'Boz.'

And, with all good wishes for yourself, and with a sincere reciprocation of all your kindly feeling, I am, dear Sir,

Faithfully yours.



## 50 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

OLD SHIP HOTEL, BRIGHTON,  
*Twenty-sixth February, 1841.*

Mr. George  
Cattermole.

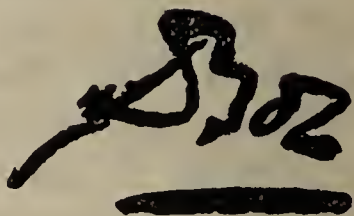
MY DEAR KITTENMOLES,—I passed your house on Wednesday, being then atop of the Brighton Era; but there was nobody at the door, saving a solitary poulterer, and all my warm-hearted aspirations lodged in the goods he was delivering. No doubt you observed a peculiar relish in your dinner. That was the cause.

I send you the MS. I fear you will have to read all the five slips; but the subject I think of is at the top of the last, when the guest, with his back towards the spectator, is looking out of window. I think, in your hands, it will be a very pretty one.

Then, my boy, when you have done it, turn your thoughts (as soon as other engagements will allow) first to the outside of The Warren—see No. 1; secondly, to the outside of the locksmith's house, by night—see No. 3. Put a penny pistol to Chapman's head and demand the blocks of him.

I have addled my head with writing all day, and have barely wit enough left to send my love to my cousin, and—there's a genealogical poser!—what relation of mine may the dear little child be? At present, I desire to be commended to her clear blue eyes.—Always, my dear George,

Faithfully yours,



DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Wednesday, Tenth March, 1841.*

Mr. R.  
Monckton  
Milnes.

MY DEAR MILNES,—I thank you very much for the *Nickleby* correspondence, which I will keep for a day or two, and return when I see you. Poor fellow! The long letter is quite admirable, and most affecting.

I am not quite sure either of Friday or Saturday, for, independently of the *Clock* (which for ever wants winding),

I am getting a young brother off to New Zealand just now, and have my mornings sadly cut up in consequence. But, knowing your ways, I know I may say that I will come if I can; and that if I can't I won't.

That Nellicide was the act of Heaven, as you may see any of these fine mornings when you look about you. If you knew the pain it gave me—but what am I talking of? if you don't know, nobody does. I am glad to shake you by the hand again autographically, and am always,

Faithfully yours.

1 DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, YORK GATE, REGENT'S PARK,  
*Thursday, Eighth April, 1841.*

DEAR SIR,—I am much obliged to you for <sup>Anonymous.</sup> your interesting letter. Nor am I the less pleased to receive it, by reason that I cannot find it in my conscience to agree in many important respects with the body to which you belong.

In love of virtue and hatred of vice, in the detestation of cruelty and encouragement of gentleness and mercy, all men who endeavour to be acceptable to their Creator in any way, may freely agree. There are more roads to Heaven, I am inclined to think, than any sect believes; but there can be none which have not these flowers garnishing the way.

I feel it a great tribute, therefore, to receive your letter. It is most welcome and acceptable to me. I thank you for it heartily, and am proud of the approval of one who suffered in his youth, even more than my poor child.

While you teach in your walk of life the lessons of tenderness you have learnt in sorrow, trust me that in mine, I will pursue cruelty and oppression, the enemies of all God's creatures of all codes and creeds, so long as I have the energy of thought and the power of giving it utterance.

Faithfully yours.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Twenty-ninth April, 1841.*

MY DEAR AINSWORTH,—With all imaginable pleasure. I quite look forward to the day. It is an age since we met, and it ought not to be.

Mr.  
William  
Harrison  
Ainsworth.



## 52 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

The artist has just sent home your *Nickleby*. He suggested variety, pleading his fancy and genius. As an artful binder must have his way, I put the best face on the matter, and gave him his. I will bring it together with the *Pickwick* to your house-warming with me.

The old *Royal George* went down in consequence of having too much weight on one side. I trust the new 'First Rate' won't be heavy anywhere. There seems to me to be too much whisker for a shilling, but that's a matter of taste.

Faithfully yours always.

1 DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, YORK GATE, REGENT'S PARK,  
*Monday Evening, Thirty-first May, 1841.*

Mr. G.  
Lovejoy.

SIR,—I am much obliged and flattered by the receipt of your letter, which I should have answered immediately on its arrival but for my absence from home at the moment.

My principles and inclinations would lead me to aspire to the distinction you invite me to seek, if there were any reasonable chance of success, and I hope I should do no discredit to such an honour if I won and wore it. But I am bound to add, and I have no hesitation in saying plainly, that I cannot afford the expense of a contested election. If I could, I would act on your suggestion instantly. I am not the less indebted to you and the friends to whom the thought occurred, for your good opinion and approval. I beg you to understand that I am restrained solely (and much against my will) by the consideration I have mentioned, and thank both you and them most warmly.

Yours faithfully.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Second June, 1841.*<sup>1</sup>

Countess of  
Blessington.

DEAR LADY BLESSINGTON,—The year goes round so fast, that when anything occurs to remind me of its whirling, I lose my breath, and am bewildered. So your handwriting last night had as startling an

<sup>1</sup> This, and all other Letters addressed to the Countess of Blessington, were printed in *The Literary Life and Correspondence of the Countess of Blessington*.

effect upon me, as though you had sealed your note with one of your own eyes.

I remember my promise, as in cheerful duty bound, and with Heaven's grace will redeem it. At this moment, I have not the faintest idea how, but I am going into Scotland on the nineteenth to see Jeffrey, and while I am away (I shall return, please God, in about three weeks) will look out for some accident, incident, or subject for small description, to send you when I come home. You will take the will for the deed, I know; and, remembering that I have a *Clock* which always wants winding up, will not quarrel with me for being brief.

Have you seen Townshend's magnetic boy? You heard of him, no doubt, from Count D'Orsay. If you get him to Gore House, don't, I entreat you, have more than eight people—four is a better number—to see him. He fails in a crowd, and is *marvellous* before a few.

I am told that down in Devonshire there are young ladies innumerable, who read crabbed manuscripts with the palms of their hands, and newspapers with their ankles, and so forth; and who are, so to speak, literary all over. I begin to understand what a blue-stockings means, and have not the smallest doubt that Lady —— (for instance) could write quite as entertaining a book with the sole of her foot as ever she did with her head. I am a believer in earnest, and I am sure you would be if you saw this boy, under moderately favourable circumstances, as I hope you will, before he leaves England.—Believe me, dear Lady Blessington,

Faithfully yours.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Tenth June, 1841.*

DEAR SIR,—I am favoured with your note of yesterday's date, and lose no time in replying to it. Mr. G.  
Lovejoy.

The sum you mention, though small I am aware in the abstract, is greater than I could afford for such a purpose: as the mere sitting in the House and attending to my duties, if I were a member, would oblige me to make many pecuniary sacrifices, consequent upon the very nature of my pursuits.

The course you suggest did occur to me when I received



## 54 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

your first letter, and I have very little doubt indeed that the Government would support me—perhaps to the whole extent. But I cannot satisfy myself that to enter Parliament under such circumstances would enable me to pursue that honourable independence without which I could neither preserve my own respect nor that of my constituents. I confess therefore (it may be from not having considered the points sufficiently, or in the right light) that I cannot bring myself to propound the subject to any member of the administration whom I know. I am truly obliged to you nevertheless, and am, dear Sir,

Faithfully yours.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE,  
*Wednesday Evening, Twenty-eighth July, 1841.*

Mr. George Cattermole. MY DEAR GEORGE,—Can you do for me by Saturday evening—I know the time is short, but I think the subject will suit you, and I am greatly pressed—a party of rioters (with Hugh and Simon Tappertit conspicuous among them) in old John Willet's bar, turning the liquor taps to their own advantage, smashing bottles, cutting down the grove of lemons, sitting astride on casks, drinking out of the best punch-bowls, eating the great cheese, smoking sacred pipes, etc. etc.; John Willet, fallen backward in his chair, regarding them with a stupid horror, and quite alone among them, with none of The Maypole customers at his back.

It's in your way, and you'll do it a hundred times better than I can suggest it to you, I know. Faithfully always.

BROADSTAIRS, *Friday, Sixth August, 1841.*

The same. MY DEAR GEORGE,—Here is a subject for the next number; the next to that I hope to send you the MS. of very early in the week, as the best opportunities of illustration are all coming off now, and we are in the thick of the story.

The rioters went, sir, from John Willet's bar (where you saw them to such good purpose) straight to The Warren, which house they plundered, sacked, burned, pulled down as much of as they could, and greatly damaged and destroyed.

They are supposed to have left it about half an hour. It is night, and the ruins are here and there flaming and smoking. I want—if you understand—to show one of the turrets laid open—the turret where the alarm-bell is, mentioned in No. 1; and among the ruins (at some height if possible) Mr. Haredale just clutching our friend, the mysterious file, who is passing over them like a spirit; Solomon Daisy, if you can introduce him, looking on from the ground below.

Please to observe that the M.F. wears a large cloak, and a slouched hat. This is important, because Browne will have him in the same number, and he has not changed his dress meanwhile. Mr. Haredale is supposed to have come down here on horseback, pell-mell; to be excited to the last degree. I think it will make a queer picturesque thing in your hands. I have told Chapman and Hall that you may like to have a block of a peculiar shape for it. One of them will be with you almost as soon as you receive this.—Always, dear Cattermole,

Heartily yours.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Thursday, Thirteenth August.*

MY DEAR CATTERMOLÉ,—Will you turn your Mr. George Cattermole. attention to a frontispiece for our first volume, to come upon the left-hand side of the book as you open it, and to face a plain printed title? My idea is, some scene from the *Curiosity Shop*, in a pretty border, or scroll-work, or architectural device; it matters not what, so that it be pretty. The scene even might be a fanciful thing, partaking of the character of the story, but not reproducing any particular passage in it, if you thought that better for the effect.

I ask you to think of this, because, although the volume is not published until the end of September, there is no time to lose. We wish to have it engraved with great care, and worked very skilfully; and this cannot be done unless we get it on the stocks soon.

They will give you every opportunity of correction, alteration, revision, and all other ations and isions connected with the fine arts.—Always believe me,

Faithfully yours.



## 56 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

BROADSTAIRS, *Nineteenth August, 1841.*

Mr. George  
Cattermole

MY DEAR GEORGE,—When Hugh and a small body of rioters cut off from The Warren beckoned to their pals, they forced into a very remarkable post-chaise Dolly Varden and Emma Haredale, and bore them away with all possible rapidity; one of their company driving, and the rest running beside the chaise, climbing up behind, sitting on the top, lighting the way with their torches, etc. etc. If you can express the women inside without showing them—as by a fluttering veil, a delicate arm, or so forth appearing at the half-closed window—so much the better. Mr. Tappertit stands on the steps, which are partly down, and, hanging on to the window with one hand and extending the other with great majesty, addresses a few words of encouragement to the driver and attendants. Hugh sits upon the bar in front; the driver sitting postilion-wise, and turns round to look through the window behind him at the little doves within. The gentlemen behind are also anxious to catch a glimpse of the ladies. One of those who are running at the side may be gently rebuked for his curiosity by the cudgel of Hugh. So they cut away, sir, as fast as they can.

Always faithfully.

PS.—John Willet's bar is noble.

BROADSTAIRS, *Tuesday, Twenty-fourth August, 1841.*

Mr. W. C.  
Macready.

MY DEAR MACREADY,—I must thank you most heartily and cordially, for your kind note relative to poor Overs. I can't tell you how glad I am to know that he thoroughly deserves such kindness.

What a good fellow Elliotson is. He kept him in his room a whole hour, and has gone into his case as if he were Prince Albert; laying down all manner of elaborate projects and determining to leave his friend Wood in town when he himself goes away, on purpose to attend to him. Then he writes me four sides of paper about the man, and says he can't go back to his old work, for that requires muscular exertion (and muscular exertion he mustn't make). What are we to do with him? He says: 'Here's five pounds for the present.'

I declare before God that I could almost bear the Jones's for five years out of the pleasure I feel in knowing such things, and when I think that every dirty speck upon the fair face of the Almighty's creation, who writes in a filthy, beastly newspaper; every rotten-hearted pander who has been beaten, kicked, and rolled in the kennel, yet struts it in the editorial 'We,' once a week; every vagabond that an honest man's gorge must rise at; every live emetic in that noxious drug-shop the press, can have his fling at such men and call them knaves and fools and thieves, I grow so vicious that, with bearing hard upon my pen, I break the nib down, and, with keeping my teeth set, make my jaws ache.

I have put myself out of sorts for the day, and shall go and walk, unless the direction of this sets me up again. On second thoughts I think it will.—Always, my dear Macready,  
Your faithful Friend.

BROADSTAIRS, *Tuesday, Twenty-fourth August, 1841.*

MY DEAR GEORGE,—Firstly. Will you design, Mr. George. Cattermole. upon a block of wood, Lord George Gordon, alone and very solitary, in his prison in the Tower? The chamber as ancient as you please, and after your own fancy; the time, evening; the season, summer.

Secondly. Will you ditto upon a ditto, a sword duel between Mr. Haredale and Mr. Chester, in a grove of trees? No one close by. Mr. Haredale has just pierced his adversary, who has fallen, dying, on the grass. He (that is, Chester) tries to staunch the wound in his breast with his handkerchief; has his snuff-box on the earth beside him, and looks at Mr. Haredale (who stands with his sword in his hand, looking down on him) with most supercilious hatred, but polite to the last. Mr. Haredale is more sorry than triumphant.

Thirdly. Will you conceive and execute, after your own fashion, a frontispiece for *Barnaby*?

Fourthly. Will you also devise a subject representing 'Master Humphrey's Clock' as stopped; his chair by the fire-side, empty; his crutch against the wall; his slippers on the cold hearth; his hat upon the chair-back; the MSS. of



## 58 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

*Barnaby* and the *Curiosity Shop* heaped upon the table; and the flowers you introduced in the first subject of all withered and dead? Master Humphrey being supposed to be no more.

I have a fifthly, sixthly, seventhly, and eighthly; for I sorely want you, as I approach the close of the tale, but I won't frighten you, so we'll take breath.—Always, my dear Cattermole,

Heartily yours.

BROADSTAIRS, *Twenty-first September, 1841.*

Mr. George  
Cattermole.

MY DEAR GEORGE,—Will you, before you go on with the other subjects I gave you, do one of Hugh, bareheaded, bound, tied on a horse, and escorted by horse-soldiers to jail? If you can add an indication of old Fleet Market, and bodies of foot soldiers firing at people who have taken refuge on the tops of stalls, bulkheads, etc., it will be all the better.

Faithfully yours always.

*Twenty-eighth September, 1841.*

Mr. L.  
Gaylord  
Clark.<sup>1</sup>

MY DEAR SIR,—I condole with you from my heart on the loss<sup>2</sup> you have sustained, and I feel proud of your permitting me to sympathise with your affliction. It is a great satisfaction to me to have been addressed, under similar circumstances, by many of your countrymen since the *Curiosity Shop* came to a close. Some simple and honest hearts in the remote wilds of America have written me letters on the loss of children—so numbering my little book, or rather heroine, with their household gods; and so pouring out their trials and sources of comfort in them, before me as a friend, that I have been inexpressibly moved, and am whenever I think of them, I do assure you. You have already all the comfort, that I could lay before you; all, I hope, that the affectionate spirit of your brother, now in happiness, can shed into your soul.

On the fourth of next January, if it please God, I am coming with my wife on a three or four months' visit to

<sup>1</sup> This letter was published in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, in 1862.

<sup>2</sup> The death of his correspondent's twin-brother, Willis Gaylord Clark.

America. The British and North American packet will bring me, I hope, to Boston, and enable me, in the third week of the new year, to set my foot upon the soil I have trodden in my day-dreams many times and whose sons (and daughters) I yearn to know and to be among.

I hope you are surprised, and I hope not unpleasantly.

Faithfully yours.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Sunday, Twenty-fourth October, 1841.*

MY DEAR MRS. HOGARTH,—For God's sake be comforted, and bear this well, for the love of your remaining children.

Mrs.  
Hogarth.

I had always intended to keep poor Mary's grave for us and our dear children, and for you. But if it will be any comfort to you to have poor George buried there, I will cheerfully arrange to place the ground at your entire disposal. Do not consider me in any way. Consult only your own heart. Mine seems to tell me that as they both died so young and so suddenly, they ought both to be buried together.

Try—do try—to think that they have but preceded you to happiness, and will meet you with joy in heaven. There is consolation in the knowledge that you have treasure there, and that while you live on earth, there are creatures among the angels, who owed their being to you.

Always yours with true affection.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Sixteenth December, 1841.*

MY DEAR MARY,—I should be delighted to come and dine with you on your birthday, and to be as merry as I wish you to be always; but as I am going, within a very few days afterwards, a very long distance from home, and I shall not see any of my children for six long months, I have made up my mind to pass all that week at home for their sakes; just as you would like your papa and mamma to spend all the time they possibly could spare with you if they were about to make a dreary voyage to America; which is what I am going to do myself.

Miss Mary  
Talfourd.

But although I cannot come to see you on that day, you



may be sure I shall not forget that it is your birthday, and that I shall drink your health and many happy returns, in a glass of wine, filled as full as it will hold. And I shall dine at half-past five myself, so that we may both be drinking our wine at the same time; and I shall tell my Mary (for I have got a daughter of that name but she is a very small one as yet) to drink your health too; and we shall try and make believe that you are here, or that we are in Russell Square, which is the best thing we can do, I think, under the circumstances.

You are growing up so fast that by the time I come home again I expect you will be almost a woman; and in a very few years we shall be saying to each other: 'Don't you remember what the birthdays used to be in Russell Square?' and 'How strange it seems!' and 'How quickly time passes!' and all that sort of thing, you know. But I shall always be very glad to be asked on your birthday, and to come if you will let me, and to send my love to you, and to wish that you may live to be very old and very happy, which I do now with all my heart.—Believe me always, my dear Mary,

Yours affectionately.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE,  
*Tuesday, Twenty-eighth December, 1841.*

Mr. W. C.  
Macready.

MY DEAR MACREADY,—This note is about the saloon. I make it as brief as possible. Read it when you have time. As we were the first experimentalists last night you will be glad to know what it wants.

First, the refreshments are preposterously dear. A glass of wine is a shilling, and it ought to be sixpence.

Secondly, they were served out by the wrong sort of people—two most uncomfortable drabs of women, and a dirty man with his hat on.

Thirdly, there ought to be a box-keeper to ring a bell or give some other notice of the commencement of the overture to the after-piece. The promenaders were in a perpetual fret and worry to get back again.

And fourthly, and most important of all—if the plan is ever to succeed—you must have some notice up to the effect

that as it is now a place of resort for ladies, gentlemen are requested not to lounge there in their hats and great-coats. No ladies will go there, though the conveniences should be ten thousand times greater, while the sort of swells who have been used to kick their heels there do so in the old sort of way. I saw this expressed last night more strongly than I can tell you.

Hearty congratulations on the brilliant triumph. I have always expected one, as you know, but nobody could have imagined the reality.—Always, my dear Macready,

Affectionately yours.

MY DEAR SIR,<sup>1</sup>—There is no man in the world who could have given me the heartfelt pleasure you have, by your kind note of the thirteenth of last month. There is no living writer, and there are very few among the dead, whose approbation I should feel so proud to earn. And with everything you have written upon my shelves, and in my thoughts, and in my heart of hearts, I may honestly and truly say so. If you could know how earnestly I write this, you would be glad to read it—as I hope you will be, faintly guessing at the warmth of the hand I autobiographically hold out to you over the broad Atlantic.

Mr. Wash-  
ington  
Irving.

I wish I could find in your welcome letter some hint of an intention to visit England. I can't. I have held it at arm's length, and taken a bird's-eye view of it, after reading it a great many times, but there is no greater encouragement in it this way than on a microscopic inspection. I should love to go with you—as I have gone, God knows how often—into Little Britain, and Eastcheap, and Green Arbour Court, and Westminster Abbey. I should like to travel with you, outside the last of the coaches down to Bracebridge Hall. It would make my heart glad to compare notes with you about that shabby gentleman in the oilcloth hat and red nose, who sat in the nine-cornered back-parlour of the Masons' Arms; and about Robert Preston and the tallow-

<sup>1</sup> This, and all other Letters addressed to Mr. Washington Irving, were printed in *The Life and Letters of Washington Irving*, edited by his nephew, Mr. Pierre M. Irving.



chandler's widow, whose sitting-room is second nature to me; and about all those delightful places and people that I used to walk about and dream of in the daytime, when a very small and not over-particularly-taken-care-of boy. I have a good deal to say, too, about that dashing Alonzo de Ojeda, that you can't help being fonder of than you ought to be; and much to hear concerning Moorish legend, and poor unhappy Boabdil. Diedrich Knickerbocker I have worn to death in my pocket, and yet I should show you his mutilated carcass with a joy past all expression.

I have been so accustomed to associate you with my pleasantest and happiest thoughts, and with my leisure hours, that I rush at once into full confidence with you, and fall, as it were naturally and by the very laws of gravity, into your open arms. Questions come thronging to my pen as to the lips of people who meet after long hoping to do so. I don't know what to say first or what to leave unsaid, and am constantly disposed to break off and tell you again how glad I am this moment has arrived.

My dear Washington Irving, I cannot thank you enough for your cordial and generous praise, or tell you what deep and lasting gratification it has given me. I hope to have many letters from you, and to exchange a frequent correspondence. I send this to say so. After the first two or three I shall settle down into a connected style, and become gradually rational.

You know what the feeling is, after having written a letter, sealed it, and sent it off. I shall picture you reading this, and answering it before it has lain one night in the post-office. Ten to one that before the fastest packet could reach New York I shall be writing again.

Do you suppose the post-office clerks care to receive letters? I have my doubts. They get into a dreadful habit of indifference. A postman, I imagine, is quite callous. Conceive his delivering one to himself, without being startled by a preliminary double knock!

Always your faithful Friend,

1842

## NARRATIVE

IN January of this year Charles Dickens went, with his wife, to America, the house in Devonshire Terrace being let for the term of their absence (six months), and the four children left in a furnished house in Osnaburgh Street, Regent's Park, under the care of Mr. and Mrs. Macready. They returned from America in July, and in August went to Broadstairs for the autumn months as usual, and in October Charles Dickens made an expedition to Cornwall, with Mr. Forster, Mr. Maclise, and Mr. Stanfield for his companions.

During his stay at Broadstairs he was engaged in writing his *American Notes*, which book was published in October. At the end of the year he had written the first number of *Martin Chuzzlewit*, which appeared in January, 1843.

An extract from a letter, addressed to Messrs. Chapman and Hall before his departure for America, is given as a testimony of the estimation in which Charles Dickens held the firm with whom he was connected for so many years.

His letters to Mr. H. P. Smith, for many years actuary of the Eagle Insurance Office, are a combination of business and friendship. Mr. Smith gives us, as an explanation of a note to him, dated 14th July, that Charles Dickens alluded to the stamp of the office upon the cheque, which was, as he described it, 'almost a work of art'—a truculent-looking eagle seated on a rock and scattering rays over the whole sheet.

Charles Dickens made many life-long friendships during his first visit to America. Mr. Cornelius C. Felton, Greek Professor at the Cambridge University there, was one of the most heartily-loved of these friends, and we give in this year the first of two letters to Mr. Felton which he wrote while he was in America. Besides these letters we give another to Mr. Washington Irving, and one to Mr. Halleck, the American poet, and one to Dr. F. H. Deane, of Cincinnati, complying with his request to write an epitaph for the tombstone of his little child, which has been kindly copied for us by Mrs. Fields, of Boston.



At the close of the voyage to America (a very bad and dangerous one), a meeting of the passengers, with Lord Mulgrave in the chair, took place, and a piece of plate was presented and a vote of thanks proposed to the captain of the *Britannia*, Captain Hewett. The vote of thanks, being drawn up by Charles Dickens, is given here. We have letters in this year to Mr. Thomas Hood, Miss Pardoe, Mrs. Trollope, and Mr. W. P. Frith. The last-named artist—then a very young man—had made great success with several charming pictures of Dolly Varden. One of these was bought by Charles Dickens, who ordered a companion picture of Kate Nickleby from the young painter, whose acquaintance he made at the same time; and the two letters to Mr. Frith have reference to the purchase of the one picture and the commission of the other.

The letter to Mr. Cattermole is an acknowledgment also of a completed commission of two water-colour drawings, from the subjects of two of Mr. Cattermole's illustrations to *The Old Curiosity Shop*.

A note to Mr. Macready, at the close of this year, refers to the first representation of Mr. Westland Marston's play, *The Patrician's Daughter*. Charles Dickens took great interest in the production of this work at Drury Lane. It was, to a certain extent, an experiment of the effect of a tragedy of modern times and in modern dress; and the prologue, which Charles Dickens wrote and which we give, was intended to show that there need be no incongruity between plain clothes of this century and high tragedy. The play was quite successful.

. . . . .

Messrs.  
Chapman  
and Hall.

Having disposed of the business part of this letter, I should not feel at ease on leaving England if I did not tell you once more with my whole heart that your conduct to me on this and all other occasions has been honourable, manly, and generous, and that I have felt it a solemn duty, in the event of any accident happening to me while I am away, to place this testimony upon record. It forms part of a will I have made for the security of my

children; for I wish them to know it when they are capable of understanding your worth and my appreciation of it.—  
 Always believe me, Faithfully and truly yours.

ADELPHI HOTEL, LIVERPOOL, *Monday, Third January, 1842.*

MY DEAR MITTON,—This is a short note, but I will fulfil the adage and make it a merry one. Mr.  
Thomas  
Mitton.

We came down in great comfort. Our luggage is now aboard. Anything so utterly and monstrously absurd as the size of our cabin, ‘no gentleman of England who lives at home at ease’ can for a moment imagine. Neither of the portmanteaus would go into it. There!

These Cunard packets are not very big you know actually, but the quantity of sleeping-berths makes them much smaller, so that the saloon is not nearly as large as in one of the Ramsgate boats. The ladies’ cabin is so close to ours that I could knock the door open without getting off something they call my bed, but which I believe to be a muffin beaten flat. This is a great comfort, for it is an excellent room (the only good one in the ship); and if there be only one other lady besides Kate, as the stewardess thinks, I hope I shall be able to sit there very often.

They talk of seventy passengers, but I can’t think there will be so many; they talk besides (which is even more to the purpose) of a very fine passage, having had a noble one this time last year. God send it so! We are in the best spirits, and full of hope. I was dashed for a moment when I saw our ‘cabin,’ but I got over that directly, and laughed so much at its ludicrous proportions, that you might have heard me all over the ship.

God bless you! Write to me by the first opportunity. I will do the like to you.—And always believe me,

Your old and faithful Friend.

At a meeting of the passengers on board the *Britannia* steamship, travelling from Liverpool to Boston, held in the saloon of that vessel, on Friday, the twenty-first January, 1842, it was moved and seconded:

‘That the Earl of Mulgrave do take the chair.’



The motion having been carried unanimously, the Earl of Mulgrave took the chair accordingly.

It was also moved and seconded, and carried unanimously:

‘That Charles Dickens, Esq., be appointed secretary and treasurer to the meeting.’

The three following resolutions were then proposed and carried *nem. con.*:

‘First. That, gratefully recognising the blessing of Divine Providence by which we are brought nearly to the termination of our voyage, we have great pleasure in expressing our high appreciation of Captain Hewett’s nautical skill and of his indefatigable attention to the management and safe conduct of the ship, during a more than ordinarily tempestuous passage.

‘Secondly. That a subscription be opened for the purchase of a piece of silver plate, and that Captain Hewett be respectfully requested to accept it, as a sincere expression of the sentiments embodied in the foregoing resolution.

‘Thirdly. That a committee be appointed to carry these resolutions into effect; and that the committee be composed of the following gentlemen: Charles Dickens, Esq., E. Dunbar, Esq., and Solomon Hopkins, Esq.’

The committee having withdrawn and conferred with Captain Hewett, returned, and informed the meeting that Captain Hewett desired to attend and express his thanks, which he did.

The amount of the subscription was reported at fifty pounds, and the list was closed. It was then agreed that the following inscription should be placed upon the testimonial to Captain Hewett:

THIS PIECE OF PLATE  
was presented to  
CAPTAIN JOHN HEWETT,  
of the BRITANNIA Steam-ship,

By the Passengers on board that vessel in a voyage from Liverpool to Boston, in the month of January, 1842,  
 As a slight acknowledgment of his great ability and skill  
 under circumstances of much difficulty and danger,  
 And as a feeble token of their lasting gratitude.

Thanks were then voted to the chairman and to the secretary, and the meeting separated..

TREMONT HOUSE, BOSTON, *Thirty-first January*, 1842.

MY DEAR MITTON,—I am so exhausted with the life I am obliged to lead here, that I have had time to write but one letter which is at all deserving of the name, as giving any account of our movements. Forster has it in trust, to tell you all its news; and he has also some newspapers which I had an opportunity of sending him, in which you will find further particulars of our progress.

Mr.  
Thomas  
Mitton.

We had a dreadful passage, the worst, the officers all concur in saying, that they have ever known. We were eighteen days coming; experienced a dreadful storm which swept away our paddle-boxes and stove our lifeboats; and ran aground besides, near Halifax, among rocks and breakers, where we lay at anchor all night. After we left the English Channel we had only one fine day. And we had the additional discomfort of being eighty-six passengers. I was ill five days, Kate six; though, indeed, she had a swelled face and suffered the utmost terror all the way.

I can give you no conception of my welcome here. There never was a king or emperor upon the earth so cheered and followed by crowds, and entertained in public at splendid balls and dinners, and waited on by public bodies and deputations of all kinds. I have had one from the Far West—a journey of two thousand miles! (If I go out in a carriage, the crowd surround it and escort me home; if I go to the theatre, the whole house (crowded to the roof) rises as one man, and the timbers ring again. You cannot imagine what it is. I have five great public dinners on hand at this moment, and invitations from every town and village and city in the States.

There is a great deal afloat here in the way of subjects for



## 68 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

description. I keep my eyes open pretty wide, and hope to have done so to some purpose by the time I come home.

Always your faithful Friend.

CARLTON HOUSE, *Fourteenth February*, 1842.

Mr. Fitz-  
Greene  
Halleck.

MY DEAR SIR,—Will you come and breakfast with me on Tuesday, the twenty-second, at half-past ten? Say yes. I should have been truly delighted to have a talk with you to-night (being quite alone), but the doctor says that if I talk to man, woman, or child this evening I shall be dumb to-morrow.—Believe me, with true regard,

Faithfully your Friend.

FULLER'S HOTEL, WASHINGTON, *Monday, Fourteenth March*, 1842.

Professor  
Felton.

MY DEAR FELTON,<sup>1</sup>—I was more delighted than I can possibly tell you to receive (last Saturday night) your welcome letter. We and the oysters missed you terribly in New York. You carried away with you more than half the delight and pleasure of my New World; and I heartily wish you could bring it back again.

There are very interesting men in this place—highly interesting, of course—but it's not a comfortable place; is it? If spittle could wait at table we should be nobly attended, but as that property has not been imparted to it in the present state of mechanical science, we are rather lonely and orphan-like, in respect of 'being looked after.' A blithe black was introduced on our arrival, as our peculiar and especial attendant. He is the only gentleman in the town who has a peculiar delicacy in intruding upon my valuable time. It usually takes seven rings and a threatening message from —— to produce him; and when he comes he goes to fetch something, and, forgetting it by the way, comes back no more.

We have been in great distress, really in distress, at the non-arrival of the *Caledonia*. You may conceive what our joy was, when, while we were out dining yesterday, Putnam<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This, and all other Letters addressed to Professor Felton, were printed in Mr. Field's *Yesterdays with Authors*, originally published in the *Atlantic Monthly Magazine*.

<sup>2</sup> An American gentleman, who travelled with Charles Dickens, as his secretary, during his visit to America.

arrived with the joyful intelligence of her safety. The very news of her having really arrived seemed to diminish the distance between ourselves and home, by one half at least.

And this morning (though we have not yet received our heap of despatches, for which we are looking eagerly forward to this night's mail)—this morning there reached us unexpectedly, through the Government bag (Heaven knows how they came here!), two of our many and long-looked-for letters, wherein was a circumstantial account of the whole conduct and behaviour of our pets; with marvellous narrations of Charley's precocity at a Twelfth Night juvenile party at Macready's; and tremendous predictions of the governess, dimly suggesting his having got out of pot-hooks and hangers, and darkly insinuating the possibility of his writing us a letter before long; and many other workings of the same prophetic spirit, in reference to him and his sisters, very gladdening to their mother's heart, and not at all depressing to their father's. There was, also, the doctor's report, which was a clean bill; and the nurse's report, which was perfectly electrifying; showing as it did how Master Walter had been weaned, and had cut a double tooth, and done many other extraordinary things, quite worthy of his high descent. In short, we were made very happy and grateful; and felt as if the prodigal father and mother had got home again.

What do you think of this incendiary card being left at my door last night? 'General G. sends compliments to Mr. Dickens, and called with two literary ladies. As the two L. L.'s are ambitious of the honour of a personal introduction to Mr. D., General G. requests the honour of an appointment for to-morrow.' I draw a veil over my sufferings. They are sacred. We shall be in Buffalo, please Heaven, on the thirtieth of April. If I don't find a letter from you in the care of the postmaster at that place, I'll never write to you from England.

But if I *do* find one, my right hand shall forget its cunning, before I forget to be your truthful and constant correspondent; not, dear Felton, because I promised it, nor because I have a natural tendency to correspond (which is far from being the case), nor because I am truly grateful to



you for, and have been made truly proud by, that affectionate and elegant tribute which —— sent me, but because you are a man after my own heart, and I love you *well*. And for the love I bear you, and the pleasure with which I shall always think of you, and the glow I shall feel when I see your handwriting in my own home, I hereby enter into a solemn league and covenant to write as many letters to you as you write to me, at least. Amen.

Come to England! Come to England! Our oysters are small, I know; they are said by Americans to be coppery; but our hearts are of the largest size. We are thought to excel in shrimps, to be far from despicable in point of lobsters, and in periwinkles are considered to challenge the universe. Our oysters, small though they be, are not devoid of the refreshing influence which that species of fish is supposed to exercise in these latitudes. Try them and compare.

Affectionately yours.

WASHINGTON, *Monday Afternoon, Twenty-first March, 1842.*

Mr. Wash-  
ington  
Irving.

MY DEAR IRVING,—We passed through—literally passed through—this place again to-day. I did not come to see you, for I really have not the heart to say ‘good-bye’ again, and felt more than I can tell you when we shook hands last Wednesday.

You will not be at Baltimore, I fear? I thought, at the time, that you only said you might be there, to make our parting the gayer.

Wherever you go, God bless you! What pleasure I have had in seeing and talking with you, I will not attempt to say. I shall never forget it as long as I live. What would I give, if we could have but a quiet week together! Spain is a lazy place, and its climate an indolent one. But if you have ever leisure under its sunny skies to think of a man who loves you, and holds communion with your spirit oftener, perhaps, than any other person alive—leisure from listlessness, I mean—and will write to me in London, you will give me an inexpressible amount of pleasure.

Your affectionate Friend.

BALTIMORE, *Twenty-second March*, 1842.

Mr. W. C.  
Macready.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I beg your pardon, but you were speaking of rash leaps at hasty conclusions. Are you quite sure you designed that remark for me? Have you not, in the hurry of correspondence, slipped a paragraph into my letters which belongs of right to somebody else? When did you ever find me leap at wrong conclusions? I pause for a reply.

Pray, sir, did you ever find me admiring Mr. ——? On the contrary, did you never hear of my protesting through good, better, and best report that he was not an open or a candid man, and would one day, beyond all doubt, displease you by not being so? I pause again for a reply.

Are you quite sure, Mr. Macready—and I address myself to you with the sternness of a man in the pit—are you quite sure, sir, that you do not view America through the pleasant mirage which often surrounds a thing that has been, but not a thing that is? Are you quite sure that when you were here you relished it as well as you do now when you look back upon it? The early spring birds, Mr. Macready, *do* sing in the groves that you were, very often, not over well pleased with many of the new country's social aspects. Are the birds to be trusted? Again I pause for a reply.

My dear Macready, I desire to be so honest and just to those who have so enthusiastically and earnestly welcomed me, that I burned the last letter I wrote to you—even to you to whom I would speak as to myself—rather than let it come with anything that might seem like an ill-considered word of disappointment. I preferred that you should think me neglectful (if you could imagine anything so wild) rather than I should do wrong in this respect. Still it is of no use. I *am* disappointed. This is not the republic I came to see; this is not the republic of my imagination. I infinitely prefer a liberal monarchy—even with its sickening accompaniments of court circulars—to such a government as this. The more I think of its use and strength, the poorer and more trifling in a thousand aspects it appears in my eyes. In everything of which it has made a boast—excepting its education of the people and its care for poor children—it sinks



immeasurably below the level I had placed it upon; and England, even England, bad and faulty as the old land is, and miserable as millions of her people are, rises in the comparison.

*You* live here, Macready, as I have sometimes heard you imagining! *You!* Loving you with all my heart and soul, and knowing what your disposition really is, I would not condemn you to a year's residence on this side of the Atlantic for any money. Freedom of opinion! Where is it? I see a press more mean, and paltry, and silly, and disgraceful than any country I ever knew. If that is its standard, here it is. But I speak of Bancroft, and am advised to be silent on that subject, for he is 'a black sheep—a Democrat.' I speak of Bryant, and am entreated to be more careful, for the same reason. I speak of international copyright, and am implored not to ruin myself outright. I speak of Miss Martineau, and all parties—Slave Upholders and Abolitionists, Whigs, Tyler Whigs, and Democrats—shower down upon me a perfect cataract of abuse. 'But what has she done? Surely she praised America enough!' 'Yes, but she told us of some of our faults, and Americans can't bear to be told of their faults. Don't split on that rock, Mr. Dickens, don't write about America; we are so very suspicious.'

Freedom of opinion! Macready, if I had been born here and had written my books in this country, producing them with no stamp of approval from any other land, it is my solemn belief that I should have lived and died poor, unnoticed, and a 'black sheep' to boot. I never was more convinced of anything than I am of that.

The people are affectionate, generous, open-hearted, hospitable, enthusiastic, good-humoured, polite to women, frank and candid to all strangers, anxious to oblige, far less prejudiced than they have been described to be, frequently polished and refined, very seldom rude or disagreeable. I have made a great many friends here, even in public conveyances, whom I have been truly sorry to part from. In the towns I have formed perfect attachments. I have seen none of that greediness and indecorousness on which travellers have laid so much emphasis. I have returned frankness with frankness; met

questions not intended to be rude, with answers meant to be satisfactory; and have not spoken to one man, woman, or child of any degree who has not grown positively affectionate before we parted. In the respects of not being left alone, and of being horribly disgusted by tobacco chewing and tobacco spittle, I have suffered considerably. The sight of slavery in Virginia, the hatred of British feeling upon the subject, and the miserable hints of the important indignation of the South, have pained me very much! on the last head, of course, I have felt nothing but a mingled pity and amusement; on the other, sheer distress. But however much I like the ingredients of this great dish, I cannot but come back to the point upon which I started, and say that the dish itself goes against the grain with me, and that I don't like it.

You know that I am truly a Liberal. I believe I have as little pride as most men, and I am conscious of not the smallest annoyance from being 'hail fellow well met' with everybody. I have not had greater pleasure in the company of any set of men among the thousands I have received than in that of the carmen of Hertford, who presented themselves in a body in their blue frocks, among a crowd of well-dressed ladies and gentlemen, and bade me welcome through their spokesman. They had all read my books, and all perfectly understood them. It is not these things I have in my mind when I say that the man who comes to this country a Radical and goes home again with his opinions unchanged, must be a Radical on reason, sympathy, and reflection, and one who has so well considered the subject that he has no chance of wavering.

We have been to Boston, Worcester, Hertford, New Haven, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, Fredericksburgh, Richmond, and back to Washington again. The premature heat of the weather (it was eighty yesterday in the shade) and Clay's advice—how you would like Clay!—have made us determine not to go to Charleston; but having got to Richmond, I think I should have turned back under any circumstances. We remain at Baltimore for two days, of which this is one; then we go to Harrisburgh. Then by the canal boat and the railroad over the Alleghany Moun-



tains to Pittsburgh, then down the Ohio to Cincinnati, then to Louisville, and then to St. Louis. I have been invited to a public entertainment in every town I have entered, and have refused them; but I have excepted St. Louis as the farthest point of my travels. My friends there have passed some resolutions which Forster has, and will show you. From St. Louis we cross to Chicago, traversing immense prairies Thence by the lakes and Detroit to Buffalo, and so to Niagara. A run into Canada follows of course, and then—let me write the blessed word in capitals—we turn towards HOME.

Kate has written to Mrs. Macready, and it is useless for me to thank you, my dearest friend, or her, for your care of our dear children, which is our constant theme of discourse. Forster has gladdened our hearts with his account of the triumph of *Acis and Galatea*, and I am anxiously looking for news of the tragedy. Forrest breakfasted with us at Richmond last Saturday—he was acting there, and I invited him—and he spoke very gratefully, and very like a man, of your kindness to him when he was in London.

David Colden is as good a fellow as ever lived; and I am deeply in love with his wife. Indeed we have received the greatest and most earnest and zealous kindness from the whole family, and quite love them all. Do you remember one Greenhow, whom you invited to pass some days with you at the hotel on the Kaatskill Mountains? He is translator to the State Office at Washington, has a very pretty wife, and a little girl of five years old. We dined with them, and had a very pleasant day. The President invited me to dinner, but I couldn't stay for it. I had a private audience, however, and we attended the public drawing-room besides.

Now, don't you rush at the quick conclusion that I have rushed at a quick conclusion. Pray, be upon your guard. If you can by any process estimate the extent of my affectionate regard for you, and the rush I shall make when I reach London to take you by your true right hand, I don't object. But let me entreat you to be very careful how you come down upon the sharp-sighted individual who pens these words, which you seem to me to have done in what Willmott

would call 'one of Mr. Macready's rushes.'—I am ever, my  
 dear Macready, Your faithful Friend.

BALTIMORE, UNITED STATES, *Twenty-second March, 1842.*

MY DEAR FRIEND,—We have been as far south  
 as Richmond in Virginia (where they grow and  
 manufacture tobacco, and where the labour is all  
 performed by slaves), but the season in those latitudes is so  
 intensely and prematurely hot, that it was considered a mat-  
 ter of doubtful expediency to go to Charleston. We start  
 for the Far West—which includes mountain travelling, and  
 lake travelling, and prairie travelling—the day after to-mor-  
 row, at eight o'clock in the morning; and shall be in the  
 West, and from there going northward again, until the thir-  
 tieth of April or first of May, when we shall halt for a week  
 at Niagara, before going further into Canada. We have  
 taken our passage home (God bless the word) in the *George*  
*Washington* packet-ship from New York. She sails on the  
 seventh of June.

Mr.  
 Thomas  
 Mitton.

I have departed from my resolution not to accept any more  
 public entertainments—they have been proposed in every  
 town I have visited—in favour of the people of St. Louis,  
 my utmost western point. That town is on the borders of the  
 Indian territory, a trifling distance from this place—only  
 two thousand miles! At my second halting-place I shall be  
 able to write to fix the day; I suppose it will be somewhere  
 about the twelfth of April. Think of my going so far  
 towards the setting sun to dinner!

In every town where we stay, though it be only for a day,  
 we hold a regular levee or drawing-room, where I shake hands  
 on an average with five or six hundred people, who pass on  
 from me to Kate, and are shaken again by her. Maclise's  
 picture of our darlings stands upon a table or sideboard the  
 while; and my travelling secretary, assisted very often by a  
 committee belonging to the place, presents the people in due  
 form. Think of two hours of this every day, and the people  
 coming in by hundreds, all fresh, and piping hot, and full of  
 questions, when we are literally exhausted and can hardly  
 stand! I really do believe that if I had not a lady with me,



I should have been obliged to leave the country and go back to England. But for her they never would leave me alone by day or night, and as it is, a slave comes to me now and then in the middle of the night with a letter, and waits at the bedroom door for an answer.

It was so hot at Richmond that we could scarcely breathe, and the peach and other fruit trees were in full blossom; it was so cold at Washington next day that we were shivering; but even in the same town you might often wear nothing but a shirt and trousers in the morning, and two great-coats at night, the thermometer very frequently taking a little trip of thirty degrees between sunrise and sunset.

They do lay it on at the hotels in such style! They charge by the day, so that whether one dines out or dines at home makes no manner of difference. T'other day I wrote to order our rooms at Philadelphia to be ready on a certain day, and was detained a week longer than I expected in New York. The Philadelphia landlord not only charged me half rent for the rooms during the whole of that time, but board for myself and Kate and Anne<sup>1</sup> during the whole time too, though we were actually boarding at the same expense during the same time in New York! What do you say to that? If I remonstrated, the whole virtue of the newspapers would be aroused directly.

Parties—parties—parties—of course, every day and night. But it's not all parties. I go into the prisons, the police-offices, the watch-houses, the hospitals, the workhouses. I was out half the night in New York with two of their most famous constables; started at midnight, and went into every brothel, thieves' house, murdering hovel, sailors' dancing place, and abode of villany, both black and white, in the town. I went *incog.* behind the scenes to the little theatre where Mitchell is making a fortune. He has been rearing a little dog for me, and has called him 'Boz.'<sup>2</sup> I am going to

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Dickens's maid.

<sup>2</sup> The little dog—a white Havana spaniel—*was* brought home and renamed, after an incidental character in *Nicholas Nickleby*, 'Mr. Snittle Timbery.' This was shortened to 'Timber,' and under that name the little dog lived to be very old, and accompanied the family in all its migrations, including the visits to Italy and Switzerland.

bring him home. In a word I go everywhere, and a hard life it is.

When I next write to you, I shall have begun, I hope, to turn my face homeward. I have a great store of oddity and whimsicality, and am going now into the oddest and most characteristic part of this most queer country.

And I am always.

CINCINNATI, OHIO, *Fourth April*, 1842.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have not been unmindful of your request for a moment, but have not been able to think of it until now. I hope my good friends (for whose christian-names I have left blanks in the epitaph) may like what I have written, and that they will take comfort and be happy again. I sail on the seventh of June, and purpose being at the Carlton House, New York, about the first. It will make me easy to know that this letter has reached you.

Faithfully yours.

### This is the Grave of a Little Child

WHOM GOD IN HIS GOODNESS CALLED TO A BRIGHT ETERNITY

WHEN HE WAS VERY YOUNG.

HARD AS IT IS FOR HUMAN AFFECTION TO RECONCILE ITSELF TO  
DEATH IN ANY SHAPE (AND MOST OF ALL, PERHAPS, AT  
FIRST, IN THIS),

HIS PARENTS CAN EVEN NOW BELIEVE THAT IT WILL BE A CON-  
SOLATION TO THEM THROUGHOUT THEIR LIVES,  
AND WHEN THEY SHALL HAVE GROWN OLD AND GRAY,

Always to think of him as a Child in Heaven.

'And Jesus called a little child unto Him, and set him in the  
midst of them.'

HE WAS THE SON OF Q—— AND M—— THORNTON, CHRIS-  
TENED CHARLES JERKING.

HE WAS BORN ON THE 20TH DAY OF JANUARY, 1841,

AND HE DIED ON THE 12TH DAY OF MARCH, 1842,

HAVING LIVED ONLY THIRTEEN MONTHS AND TWENTY DAYS.

NIAGARA FALLS (English Side), *Sunday, First May*, 1842.

MY DEAR HENRY,—We have had a blessed in-  
terval of quiet in this beautiful place, of which,  
as you may suppose, we stood greatly in need, not only by

Dr. F. H.  
Deane.  
Mr. Henry  
Austin.



reason of our hard travelling for a long time, but on account of the incessant persecutions of the people, by land and water, on stage-coach, railway car, and steamer, which exceeds anything you can picture to yourself by the utmost stretch of your imagination. So far we have had this hotel nearly to ourselves. It is a large square house, standing on a bold height, with overhanging eaves like a Swiss cottage, and a wide handsome gallery outside every story. These colonnades make it look so very light, that it has exactly the appearance of a house built with a pack of cards; and I live in bodily terror lest any man should venture to step out of a little observatory on the roof, and crush the whole structure with one stamp of his foot.

Our sitting-room (which is large and low like a nursery) is on the second floor, and is so close to the Falls that the windows are always wet and dim with spray. Two bedrooms open out of it—one our own; one Anne's. The secretary slumbers near at hand, but without these sacred precincts. From the three chambers, or any part of them, you can see the Falls rolling and tumbling, and roaring and leaping, all day long, with bright rainbows making fiery arches down a hundred feet below us. When the sun is on them, they shine and glow like molten gold. When the day is gloomy, the water falls like snow, or sometimes it seems to crumble away like the face of a great chalk cliff, or sometimes again to roll along the front of the rock like white smoke. But it all seems gay or gloomy, dark or light, by sun or moon. From the bottom of both Falls, there is always rising up a solemn ghostly cloud, which hides the boiling cauldron from human sight, and makes it in its mystery a hundred times more grand than if you could see all the secrets that lie hidden in its tremendous depth. One Fall is as close to us as York Gate is to No. 1 Devonshire Terrace. The other (the great Horse-Shoe Fall) may be, perhaps, about half as far off as 'Creedy's.'<sup>1</sup> One circumstance in connection with them is, in all the accounts, greatly exaggerated—I mean the noise. Last night was perfectly still. Kate and I could just hear

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Macready's—so pronounced by one of Charles Dickens' little children.

them, at the quiet time of sunset, a mile off. Whereas, believing the statements I had heard I began putting my ear to the ground, like a savage or a bandit in a ballet, thirty miles off, when we were coming here from Buffalo.

I was delighted to receive your famous letter, and to read your account of our darlings, whom we long to see with an intensity it is impossible to shadow forth, ever so faintly. I do believe, though I say it as shouldn't, that they are good 'uns—both to look at and to go. I roared out this morning, as soon as I was awake, 'Next month,' which we have been longing to be able to say ever since we have been here. I really do not know how we shall ever knock at the door, when that slowest of all impossibly slow hackney-coaches shall pull up—at home.

I am glad you exult in the fight I have had about the copyright. If you knew how they tried to stop me, you would have a still greater interest in it. The greatest men in England have sent me out, through Forster, a very manly, and becoming, and spirited memorial and address, backing me in all I have done. I have despatched it to Boston for publication, and am coolly prepared for the storm it will raise. But my best rod is in pickle.

Is it not a horrible thing that scoundrel booksellers should grow rich here from publishing books, the authors of which do not reap one farthing from their issue by scores of thousands; and that every vile, blackguard, and detestable newspaper, so filthy and bestial that no honest man would admit one into his house for a scullery door-mat, should be able to publish those same writings side by side, cheek by jowl, with the coarsest and most obscene companions with which they must become connected, in course of time, in people's minds? Is it tolerable that, besides being robbed and rifled, an author should be forced to appear in any form, in any vulgar dress, in any atrocious company; that he should have no choice of his audience, no control over his own distorted text, and that he should be compelled to jostle out of the course the best men in this country, who only ask to live by writing? I vow before high heaven that my blood so boils at these enormities, that when I speak about them I seem to grow twenty feet



high, and to swell out in proportion. 'Robbers that ye are,' I think to myself when I get upon my legs, 'here goes!'

The places we have lodged in, the roads we have gone over, the company we have been among, the tobacco-spittle we have wallowed in, the strange customs we have complied with, the packing-cases in which we have travelled, the woods, swamps, prairies, lakes, and mountains we have crossed, are all subjects for legends and tales at home; quires, reams, wouldn't hold them. I don't think Anne has so much as seen an American tree. She never looks at a prospect by any chance, or displays the smallest emotion at any sight whatever. She objects to Niagara that 'it's nothing but water,' and considers that 'there is too much of that.'

I suppose you have heard that I am going to act at the Montreal theatre with the officers? Farce-books being scarce, and the choice consequently limited, I have selected Keeley's part in 'Two o'Clock in the Morning.' I wrote yesterday to Mitchell, the actor and manager at New York, to get and send me a comic wig, light flaxen, with a small whisker half-way down the cheek; over this I mean to wear two night-caps, one with a tassel and one of flannel; a flannel wrapper, drab tights and slippers, will complete the costume.

I am very sorry to hear that business is so flat, but the proverb says it never rains but it pours, and it may be remarked with equal truth upon the other side, that it never *don't* rain but it holds up very much indeed. You will be busy again long before I come home, I have no doubt.

We purpose leaving this on Wednesday morning. Give my love to Letitia and to mother, and always believe me, my dear Henry,

Affectionately yours.

MONTREAL, *Saturday, Twenty-first May, 1842.*

Professor  
Felton.

MY DEAR FELTON,—I was delighted to receive your letter yesterday, and was well pleased with its contents. I anticipated objection to Carlyle's letter.<sup>1</sup> I called particular attention to it for three reasons. Firstly, because he boldly *said* what all the others *think*, and there-

<sup>1</sup> On the subject of International Copyright.

fore deserved to be manfully supported. Secondly, because it is my deliberate opinion that I have been assailed on this subject in a manner which no man with any pretensions to public respect or with the remotest right to express an opinion on a subject of universal literary interest would be assailed in any other country. . . .

I really cannot sufficiently thank you, dear Felton, for your warm and hearty interest in these proceedings. But it would be idle to pursue that theme, so let it pass.

The wig and whiskers are in a state of the highest preservation. The play comes off next Wednesday night, the twenty-fifth. What would I give to see you in the front row of the centre box, your spectacles gleaming not unlike those of my dear friend Pickwick, your face radiant with as broad a grin as a staid professor may indulge in, and your very coat, waistcoat, and shoulders expressive of what we should take together when the performance was over! I would give something (not so much, but still a good round sum) if you could only stumble into that very dark and dusty theatre in the daytime (at any minute between twelve and three), and see me with my coat off, the stage manager and universal director, urging impracticable ladies and impossible gentlemen on to the very confines of insanity, shouting and driving about, in my own person, to an extent which would justify any philanthropic stranger in clapping me into a straight-waistcoat without further inquiry, endeavouring to goad Putnam into some dim and faint understanding of a prompter's duties, and struggling in such a vortex of noise, dirt, bustle, confusion, and inextricable entanglement of speech and action as you would grow giddy in contemplating. We perform 'A Roland for an Oliver,' 'A Good Night's Rest,' and 'Deaf as a Post.' This kind of voluntary hard labour used to be my great delight. The *furor* has come strong upon me again, and I begin to be once more of opinion that nature intended me for the lessee of a national theatre, and that pen, ink, and paper have spoiled a manager.

Oh, how I look forward across that rolling water to home and its small tenantry! How I busy myself in thinking how my books look, and where the tables are, and in what posi-



tions the chairs stand relatively to the other furniture; and whether we shall get there in the night, or in the morning, or in the afternoon; and whether we shall be able to surprise them, or whether they will be too sharply looking out for us; and what our pets will say; and how they 'll look, and who will be the first to come and shake hands, and so forth! If I could but tell you how I have set my heart on rushing into Forster's study (he is my great friend, and writes at the bottom of all his letters: 'My love to Felton'), and into Maclise's painting-room, and into Macready's managerial ditto, without a moment's warning, and how I picture every little trait and circumstance of our arrival to myself, down to the very colour of the bow on the cook's cap, you would almost think I had changed places with my eldest son, and was still in pantaloons of the thinnest texture. I left all these things—'God only knows what a love I have for them—as coolly and calmly as any animated cucumber; but when I come upon them again I shall have lost all power of self-restraint, and shall as certainly make a fool of myself (in the popular meaning of that expression) as ever Grimaldi did in his way; or George the Third in his.

And not the less so, dear Felton, for having found some warm hearts, and left some instalments of earnest and sincere affection, behind me on this continent. And whenever I turn my mental telescope hitherward, trust me that one of the first figures it will descry will wear spectacles so like yours that the maker couldn't tell the difference, and shall address a Greek class in such an exact imitation of your voice, that the very students hearing it should cry, 'That's he! Three cheers. Hoo-ray-ay-ay-ay-ay!'

About those joints of yours, I think you are mistaken. They *can't* be stiff. At the worst they merely want the air of New York, which, being impregnated with the flavour of last year's oysters, has a surprising effect in rendering the human frame supple and flexible in all cases of rust.

A terrible idea occurred to me as I wrote those words. The oyster-sellers—what do they do when oysters are not in season? Is pickled salmon vended there? Do they sell crabs, shrimps, winkles, herrings? The oyster-openers—what do *they* do?

Do they commit suicide in despair, or wrench open tight drawers and cupboards and hermetically-sealed bottles for practice? Perhaps they are dentists out of the oyster season. Who knows?  
Affectionately yours.

ATHENÆUM, *Friday Afternoon.*

MY DEAR SIR,—If I could possibly have attended the meeting yesterday I would most gladly have done so. But I have been up the whole night, and was too much exhausted even to write and say so before the proceedings came on.

Mr.  
Thomas  
Longman.

I have fought the fight across the Atlantic with the utmost energy I could command; have never been turned aside by any consideration for an instant; am fresher for the fray than ever; will battle it to the death, and die game to the last.

I am happy to say that my boy is quite well again. From being in perfect health he fell into alarming convulsions with the surprise and joy of our return.

I beg my regards to Mrs. Longman, and am always,  
Faithfully yours.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Thursday, Fourteenth July, 1842.*

MY DEAR SMITH,—The cheque safely received. As you say, it would be cheap at any money. My devotion to the fine arts renders it impossible for me to cash it. I have therefore ordered it to be framed and glazed.

Mr. H. P.  
Smith.

I am really grateful to you for the interest you take in my proceedings. Next time I come into the City I will show you my introductory chapter to the American book. It may seem to prepare the reader for a much greater amount of slaughter than he will meet with; but it is honest and true. Therefore my hand does not shake.

Always faithfully your Friend.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, YORK GATE,  
REGENT'S PARK, *Nineteenth July, 1842.*

DEAR MADAM,—I beg to set you right on one point in reference to the American robbers, which perhaps you do not quite understand.

Miss  
Pardoe.



The existing law allows them to reprint any English book, without any communication whatever with the author or anybody else. My books have all been reprinted on these agreeable terms.

But sometimes, when expectation is awakened there about a book before its publication, one firm of pirates will pay a trifle to procure early proofs of it, and get so much the start of the rest as they can obtain by the time necessarily consumed in printing it. Directly it is printed it is common property, and may be reprinted a thousand times. My circular only referred to such bargains as these.

I should add that I have no hope of the States doing justice in this dishonest respect, and therefore do not expect to overtake these fellows; but we may cry 'Stop thief!' nevertheless, especially as they wince and smart under it.

Faithfully yours always.

1 DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, YORK GATE, REGENT'S PARK.  
LONDON, *Sunday, Thirty-first July, 1842.*

Professor  
Felton.

MY DEAR FELTON,—Of all the monstrous and incalculable amount of occupation that ever beset one unfortunate man, mine has been the most stupendous since I came home. The dinners I have had to eat, the places I have had to go to, the letters I have had to answer, the sea of business and of pleasure in which I have been plunged, not even the genius of an —— or the pen of a —— could describe.

Wherefore I indite a monstrously short and wildly uninteresting epistle to the American Dando; but perhaps you don't know who Dando was. He was an oyster-eater, my dear Felton. He used to go into oyster-shops, without a farthing of money, and stand at the counter eating natives, until the man who opened them grew pale, cast down his knife, staggered backward, struck his white forehead with his open hand, and cried, 'You are Dando!!!' He has been known to eat twenty dozen at one sitting, and would have eaten forty, if the truth had not flashed upon the shopkeeper. For these offences he was constantly committed to the House of Correction. During his last imprisonment he was taken ill, got

worse and worse, and at last began knocking violent double knocks at Death's door. The doctor stood beside his bed, with his fingers on his pulse. 'He is going,' says the doctor. 'I see it in his eye. There is only one thing that would keep life in him for another hour, and that is—oysters.' They were immediately brought. Dando swallowed eight, and feebly took a ninth. He held it in his mouth and looked round the bed strangely. 'Not a bad one, is it?' says the doctor. The patient shook his head, rubbed his trembling hand upon his stomach, bolted the oyster, and fell back—dead. They buried him in the prison-yard, and paved his grave with oyster-shells.

We are all well and hearty, and have already begun to wonder what time next year you and Mrs. Felton and Dr. Howe will come across the briny sea together. To-morrow we go to the seaside for two months. I am looking out for news of Longfellow, and shall be delighted when I know that he is on his way to London and this house.

I am bent upon striking at the piratical newspapers with the sharpest edge I can put upon my small axe, and hope in the next session of Parliament to stop their entrance into Canada. For the first time within the memory of man, the professors of English literature seem disposed to act together on this question. It is a good thing to aggravate a scoundrel, if one can do nothing else, and I think we *can* make them smart a little in this way. . . .

I wish you had been at Greenwich the other day, where a party of friends gave me a private dinner; public ones I have refused. C—— was perfectly wild at the reunion, and, after singing all manner of marine songs, wound up the entertainment by coming home (six miles) in a little open phaeton of mine, *on his head*, to the mingled delight and indignation of the metropolitan police. We were very jovial indeed; and I assure you that I drank your health with fearful vigour and energy.

On board that ship coming home I established a club, called the United Vagabonds, to the large amusement of the rest of the passengers. This holy brotherhood committed all kinds of absurdities, and dined always, with a variety of solemn



forms, at one end of the table, below the mast, away from all the rest. The captain being ill when we were three or four days out, I produced my medicine-chest and recovered him. We had a few more sick men after that, and I went round 'the wards' every day in great state, accompanied by two Vagabonds, habited as Ben Allen and Bob Sawyer, bearing enormous rolls of plaster and huge pairs of scissors. We were really very merry all the way, breakfasted in one party at Liverpool, shook hands, and parted most cordially. . . .

Affectionately your faithful Friend.

PS.—I have looked over my journal, and have decided to produce my American trip in two volumes. I have written about half the first since I came home, and hope to be out in October. This is 'exclusive news,' to be communicated to any friends to whom you may like to intrust it, my dear F——.

1 DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, YORK GATE, REGENT'S PARK,  
LONDON, *First September, 1842.*

Professor  
Felton.

MY DEAR FELTON,—Of course that letter in the papers was as foul a forgery as ever felon swung for. . . . I have not contradicted it publicly, nor shall I. When I tilt at such wringings out of the dirtiest mortality, I shall be another man—indeed, almost the creature they would make me.

I gave your message to Forster, who sends a despatch-box full of kind remembrances in return. He is in a great state of delight with the first volume of my American book (which I have just finished), and swears loudly by it. It is *True* and Honourable I know, and I shall hope to send it you, complete, by the first steamer in November.

Your description of the porter and the carpet-bags prepares me for a first-rate facetious novel, brimful of the richest humour, on which I have no doubt you are engaged. What is it called? Sometimes I imagine the title-page thus:

OYSTERS  
IN  
EVERY STYLE  
OR  
OPENINGS  
OF  
LIFE  
BY  
YOUNG DANDO.

As to the man putting the luggage on his head, as a sort of sign, I adopt it from this hour.

I date this from London, where I have come, as a good profligate, graceless bachelor, for a day or two; leaving my wife and babies at the seaside. . . . Heavens! if you were but here at this minute! A piece of salmon and a steak are cooking in the kitchen; it's a very wet day, and I have had a fire lighted; the wine sparkles on a side-table; the room looks the more snug from being the only *undismantled* one in the house; plates are warming for Forster and Maclise, whose knock I am momentarily expecting; that groom I told you of, who never comes into the house, except when we are all out of town, is walking about in his shirt-sleeves without the smallest consciousness of impropriety; a great mound of proofs are waiting to be read aloud, after dinner. With what a shout I would clap you down into the easiest chair, my genial Felton, if you could but appear, and order you a pair of slippers instantly!

Since I have written this, the aforesaid groom—a very small man (as the fashion is), with fiery red hair (as the fashion is *not*)—has looked very hard at me and fluttered about me at the same time, like a giant butterfly. After a pause, he says in a Sam Wellerish kind of way: 'I vent to the club this mornin', sir. There vorn't no letters, sir.' 'Very



good, Topping.' 'How 's missis, sir?' 'Pretty well, Topping.' 'Glad to hear it, sir. *My* missis ain't wery well, sir.' 'No?' 'No, sir, she 's a goin', sir, to have an hincrase wery soon, and it makes her rather nervous, sir; and ven a young voman gets at all down at sich a time, sir, she goes down wery deep, sir.' To this sentiment I replied affirmatively, and then he adds, as he stirs the fire (as if he were thinking out loud): 'Wot a mystery it is! Wot a go is natur'!' With which scrap of philosophy, he gradually gets nearer to the door, and so fades out of the room.

This same man asked me one day, soon after I came home, what Sir John Wilson was. This is a friend of mine, who took our house and servants, and everything as it stood, during our absence in America. I told him an officer. 'A wot, sir?' 'An officer.' And then, for fear he should think I meant a police-officer, I added, 'An officer in the army.' 'I beg your pardon, sir,' he said, touching his hat, 'but the club as I always drove him to wos the United Servants.'

The real name of this club is the United Service, but I have no doubt he thought it was a high-life-below-stairs kind of resort, and that this gentleman was a retired butler or superannuated footman.

There's the knock, and the *Great Western* sails, or steams rather, to-morrow. Write soon again, dear Felton, and ever believe me. . . . Your affectionate Friend.

PS.—All good angels prosper Dr. Howe! He, at least, will not like me the less, I hope, for what I shall say of Laura.

BROADSTAIRS, *Sunday, Twenty-fifth September, 1842.*

Mr. Henry      MY DEAR HENRY,—Pray tell Mr. Chadwick that  
Austin.      I am greatly obliged to him for his remembrance of me, and I heartily concur with him in the great importance and interest of the subject, though I do differ from him, to the death, on his crack topic—the New Poor-Law.

I have been turning my thoughts to this very item in the condition of American towns, and had put their present aspects strongly before the American people; therefore I shall read his report with the greater interest and attention.

I need scarcely say that I shall joyfully talk with you about the Metropolitan Improvement Society, then or at any time; and with love to Letitia, in which Kate and the babies join, I am always, my dear Henry,

Affectionately yours.

PS.—The children's present names are as follows:

Katey (from a lurking propensity to fieryness), Lucifer Box.

Mamey (as generally descriptive of her bearing), Mild Glo'ster.

Charley (as a corruption of Master Toby), Flaster Floby.

Walter (suggested by his high cheek-bones), Young Skull.

Each is pronounced with a peculiar howl, which I shall have great pleasure in illustrating.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Saturday, Twelfth November, 1842.*

MY DEAR MACREADY,—You pass this house <sup>Mr. W. C.</sup> every day on your way to or from the theatre. I <sup>Macready.</sup> wish you would call once as you go by, and soon, that you may have plenty of time to deliberate on what I wish to suggest to you. The more I think of Marston's play, the more sure I feel that a prologue to the purpose would help it materially, and almost decide the fate of any ticklish point on the first night. Now I have an idea (not easily explainable in writing but told in five words, that would take the prologue out of the conventional dress of prologues, quite. Get the curtain up with a dash, and begin the play with a sledge-hammer blow. If on consideration, you should think with me, I will write the prologue heartily.

Faithfully yours ever.

### PROLOGUE

TO MR. MARSTON'S PLAY OF 'THE PATRICIAN'S DAUGHTER.'

No tale of streaming plumes and harness bright  
Dwells on the poet's maiden harp to-night;  
No trumpet's clamour and no battle's fire



Breathes in the trembling accents of his lyre;  
 Enough for him, if in his lowly strain  
 He wakes one household echo not in vain;  
 Enough for him, if in his boldest word  
 The beating heart of MAN be dimly heard.

Its solemn music which, like strains that sigh  
 Through charmèd gardens, all who hearing die;  
 Its solemn music he does not pursue  
 To distant ages out of human view;  
 Nor listen to its wild and mournful chime  
 In the dead caverns on the shore of Time;  
 But musing with a calm and steady gaze  
 Before the crackling flames of living days,  
 He hears it whisper through the busy roar  
 Of what shall be and what has been before.  
 Awake the Present! Shall no scene display  
 The tragic passion of the passing day?  
 Is it with Man, as with some meaner things,  
 That out of death his single purpose springs?  
 Can his eventful life no moral teach  
 Until he be, for aye, beyond its reach?  
 Obscurely shall he suffer, act, and fade,  
 Dubb'd noble only by the sexton's spade?  
 Awake the Present! Though the steel-clad age  
 Find life alone within its storied page,  
 Iron is worn, at heart, by many still—  
 The tyrant Custom binds the serf-like will;  
 If the sharp rack, and screw, and chain be gone,  
 These later days have tortures of their own;  
 The guiltless writhe, while Guilt is stretched in sleep,  
 And Virtue lies, too often, dungeon deep.  
 Awake the Present! what the Past has sown  
 Be in its harvest garner'd, reap'd, and grown!  
 How pride breeds pride, and wrong engenders wrong,  
 Read in the volume Truth has held so long,  
 Assured that where life's flowers freshest blow,  
 The sharpest thorns and keenest briars grow,  
 How social usage has the pow'r to change  
 Good thoughts to evil; in its highest range  
 To cramp the noble soul, and turn to ruth  
 The kindling impulse of our glorious youth,  
 Crushing the spirit in its house of clay,

Learn from the lessons of the present day.  
Not light its import and not poor its mien;  
Yourselves the actors, and your homes the scene.

*Saturday Morning.*

MY DEAR MACREADY,—One suggestion, though Mr. W. C. Macready.  
it be a late one. Do have upon the table, in the opening scene of the second act, something in a velvet case, or frame, that may look like a large miniature of Mabel, such as one of Ross's, and eschew that picture. It haunts me with a sense of danger. Even a titter at that critical time, with the whole of that act before you, would be a fatal thing. The picture is bad in itself, bad in its effect upon the beautiful room, bad in all its associations with the house. In case of your having nothing at hand, I send you by bearer what would be a million times better.—Always, my dear Macready, Faithfully yours.

PS.—I need not remind you how common it is to have such pictures in cases lying about elegant rooms.

1 DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, YORK GATE, REGENT'S PARK,  
*Fifteenth November, 1842.*

MY DEAR SIR,—I shall be very glad if you will Mr. W. P. Frith.  
do me the favour to paint me two little companion pictures; one, a Dolly Varden (whom you have so exquisitely done already), the other, a Kate Nickleby. Faithfully yours always.

PS.—I take it for granted that the original picture of Dolly with the bracelet is sold?

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Seventeenth November, 1842.*

MY DEAR SIR,—Pray consult your own convenience in the matter of my little commission; The same.  
whatever suits your engagements and prospects will best suit me.

I saw an unfinished proof of Dolly at Mitchell's some two or three months ago; I thought it was proceeding excellently well then. It will give me great pleasure to see her when completed. Faithfully yours.



## 92 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Thirtieth November*, 1842.

Mr.  
Thomas  
Hood.

MY DEAR HOOD,—In asking your and Mrs. Hood's leave to bring Mrs. D.'s sister (who stays with us) on Tuesday, let me add that I should very much like to bring at the same time a very unaffected and ardent admirer of your genius, who has no small portion of that commodity in his own right, and is a very dear friend of mine and a very famous fellow; to wit, Maclise, the painter, who would be glad (as he has often told me) to know you better, and would be much pleased, I know, if I could say to him, 'Hood wants me to bring you.'

I use so little ceremony with you, in the conviction that you will use as little with me, and say, 'My dear D.—Convenient'; or, 'My dear D.—Ill-convenient,' (as the popular phrase is), just as the case may be. Of course, I have said nothing to him. Always heartily yours, Boz.

1 DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, YORK GATE, REGENT'S PARK,  
*Sixteenth December*, 1842.

Mrs.  
Trollope.

MY DEAR MRS. TROLLOPE,—Let me thank you most cordially for your kind note, in reference to my *Notes*, which has given me true pleasure and gratification.

As I never scrupled to say in America, so I can have no delicacy in saying to you, that, allowing for the change you worked in many social features of American society, and for the time that has passed since you wrote of the country, I am convinced that there is no writer who has so well and accurately (I need not add so entertainingly) described it, in many of its aspects, as you have done; and this renders your praise the more valuable to me. I do not recollect ever to have heard or seen the charge of exaggeration made against a feeble performance, though, in its feebleness, it may have been most untrue. It seems to me essentially natural, and quite inevitable, that common observers should accuse an uncommon one of this fault, and I have no doubt that you were long ago of this opinion; very much to your own comfort.

Faithfully yours.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Twentieth December*, 1842.

MY DEAR GEORGE,—It is impossible for me to tell you how greatly I am charmed with those beautiful pictures, in which the whole feeling, and thought, and expression of the little story is rendered to the gratification of my inmost heart; and on which you have lavished those amazing resources of yours with a power at which I fairly wondered when I sat down yesterday before them.

Mr. George  
Cattermole.

I took them to Mac, straightway, in a cab, and it would have done you good if you could have seen and heard him. You can't think how moved he was by the old man in the church, or how pleased I was to have chosen it before he saw the drawings.

You are such a queer fellow and hold yourself so much aloof, that I am afraid to say half I would say touching my grateful admiration; so you shall imagine the rest. Always,  
my dear Cattermole, Faithfully yours.

1 DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, YORK GATE, REGENT'S PARK,  
LONDON, *Thirty-first December*, 1842.

MY DEAR FELTON,—Many and many happy New Years to you and yours! As many happy children as may be quite convenient (no more!), and as many happy meetings between them and our children, and between you and us, as the kind fates in their utmost kindness shall favourably decree!

Professor  
Felton.

The American book (to begin with that) has been a most complete and thorough-going success. Four large editions have now been sold *and paid for*, and it has won golden opinions from all sorts of men, except our friend in F——, who is a miserable creature; a disappointed man in great poverty, to whom I have ever been most kind and considerate (I need scarcely say that); and another friend in B——, no less a person than an illustrious gentleman named ——, who wrote a story called ——. They have done no harm, and have fallen short of their mark, which, of course, was to annoy me. Now I am perfectly free from any diseased curiosity in such respects, and whenever I hear of a notice of this kind, I never read it; whereby I always conceive (don't you?) that



I get the victory. With regard to your slave-owners, they may cry, till they are as black in the face as their own slaves, that Dickens lies. Dickens does not write for their satisfaction, and Dickens will not explain for their comfort. Dickens has the name and date of every newspaper in which every one of those advertisements appeared, as they know perfectly well; but Dickens does not choose to give them, and will not at any time between this and the day of judgment. . . .

I have been hard at work on my new book, of which the first number has just appeared. The Paul Joneses who pursue happiness and profit at other men's cost will no doubt enable you to read it, almost as soon as you receive this. I hope you will like it. And I particularly commend, my dear Felton, one Mr. Pecksniff and his daughters to your tender regards. I have a kind of liking for them myself.

Blessed star of morning, such a trip as we had into Cornwall, just after Longfellow went away! The 'we' means Forster, Maclise, Stanfield (the renowned marine painter), and the Inimitable Boz. We went down into Devonshire by the railroad, and there we hired an open carriage from an innkeeper, patriotic in all Pickwick matters, and went on with post-horses. Sometimes we travelled all night, sometimes all day, sometimes both. I kept the joint-stock purse, ordered all the dinners, paid all the turnpikes, conducted facetious conversations with the post-boys, and regulated the pace at which we travelled. Stanfield (an old sailor) consulted an enormous map on all disputed points of wayfaring; and referred, moreover, to a pocket compass and other scientific instruments. The luggage was in Forster's department; and Maclise, having nothing particular to do, sang songs. Heavens! If you could have seen the necks of bottles—distracting in their immense varieties of shape—peering out of the carriage pockets! If you could have witnessed the deep devotion of the post-boys, the wild attachment of the hostlers, the maniac glee of the waiters! If you could have followed us into the earthy old churches we visited, and into the strange caverns on the gloomy sea-shore, and down into

the depths of mines, and up to the tops of giddy heights where the unspeakably green water was roaring, I don't know how many hundred feet below! If you could have seen but one gleam of the bright fires by which we sat in the big rooms of ancient inns at night, until long after the small hours had come and gone, or smelt but one steam of the hot punch (not white, dear Felton, like that amazing compound I sent you a taste of, but a rich, genial, glowing brown) which came in every evening in a huge broad china bowl! I never laughed in my life as I did on this journey. It would have done you good to hear me. I was choking and gasping and bursting the buckle off the back of my stock, all the way. And Stanfield (who is very much of your figure and temperament, but fifteen years older) got into such apoplectic entanglements that we were often obliged to beat him on the back with portmanteaus before we could recover him. Seriously, I do believe there never was such a trip. And they made such sketches, those two men, in the most romantic of our halting-places, that you would have sworn we had the Spirit of Beauty with us, as well as the Spirit of Fun. But stop till you come to England—I say no more.

The actuary of the National Debt couldn't calculate the number of children who are coming here on Twelfth Night, in honour of Charley's birthday, for which occasion I have provided a magic-lantern and divers other tremendous engines of that nature. But the best of it is that Forster and I have purchased between us the entire stock-in-trade of a conjurer, the practice and display whereof is intrusted to me. And O my dear eyes, Felton, if you could see me conjuring the company's watches into impossible tea-caddies, and causing pieces of money to fly, and burning pocket-handkerchiefs without hurting 'em, and practising in my own room, without anybody to admire, you would never forget it as long as you live. In those tricks which require a confederate, I am assisted (by reason of his imperturbable good humour) by Stanfield, who always does his part exactly the wrong way, to the unspeakable delight of all be-



holders. We come out on a small scale, to-night, at Forster's, where we see the old year out and the new one in. Particulars shall be forwarded in my next.

I have quite made up my mind that Forster really believes he *does* know you personally, and has all his life. He talks to me about you with such gravity that I am afraid to grin, and feel it necessary to look quite serious. Sometimes he *tells* me things about you, doesn't ask me, you know, so that I am occasionally perplexed beyond all telling, and begin to think it was he, and not I, who went to America. It's the queerest thing in the world.

The book I was to have given Longfellow for you is not worth sending by itself, being only a *Barnaby*. But I will look up some manuscript for you (I think I have that of the *American Notes* complete), and will try to make the parcel better worth its long conveyance. With regard to Maclise's pictures, you certainly are quite right in your impression of them; but he is 'such a discursive devil' (as he says about himself), and flies off at such odd tangents, that I feel it difficult to convey to you any general notion of his purpose. I will try to do so when I write again. I want very much to know about —— and that charming girl. . . . Give me full particulars. Will you remember me cordially to Sumner, and say I thank him for his welcome letter? The like to Hillard, with many regards to himself and his wife, with whom I had one night a little conversation which I shall not readily forget. The like to Washington Allston, and all friends who care for me and have outlived my book. . . . Always, my dear Felton,

With true regard and affection, yours.

Mr.  
Thomas  
Hood.

MY DEAR HOOD,—I can't state in figures (not very well remembering how to get beyond a million) the number of candidates for the Sanatorium matronship, but if you will ask your little boy to trace figures in the beds of your garden, beginning at the front wall, going down to the cricket-ground, coming back to the wall again, and 'carrying over' to the next door, and will then set a skilful accountant to add up the whole, the product,

as the Tutor's Assistants say, will give you the amount required. I have pledged myself (being assured of her capability) to support a near relation of Miss E——'s; otherwise, I need not say how glad I should have been to forward any wish of yours.

Very faithfully yours.





BOOK II

1843 TO 1857





1843

NARRATIVE

IN this year we give the commencement of Charles Dickens' correspondence with his beloved friends, Mr. Douglas Jerrold and Mr. Clarkson Stanfield; with Lord Morpeth (afterwards Lord Carlisle), for whom he always entertained the highest regard; and with Mr. Charles Babbage.

He was at work upon *Martin Chuzzlewit* until the end of the year, when he also wrote and published the first of his Christmas stories—*The Christmas Carol*.

He was much distressed by the sad fate of Mr. Elton (a respected actor), who was lost in the wreck of the *Pegasus*, and was very eager and earnest in his endeavours to raise a fund on behalf of Mr. Elton's children.

The 'complaint' alluded to in the letter to Mr. Macvey Napier was, that the reviewer of the *American Notes*, in the number of the *Edinburgh Review* for January, 1843, had represented him as having gone to America as a missionary in the cause of international copyright—an allegation which Charles Dickens repudiated, and which was rectified in the way he himself suggested.

The letter beginning, 'Unhappy Man,' was addressed to Mr. Macready, who was presented with a testimonial by his friends and fellow-actors on the occasion of his retirement from the management of Drury Lane Theatre.

We are sorry to be unable to give any explanation as to the nature of the Cockspur Street Society, mentioned in this first letter to Mr. Charles Babbage; but we publish it notwithstanding, considering it to be one of general interest.

The *Little History of England* was never finished—that is to say, the one alluded to in the letter to Mr. Jerrold.

Mr. David Dickson kindly furnishes us with an explanation of the letter dated Tenth May. 'It was,' he says, 'in



## 102 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

answer to a letter from me, pointing out that the "Shepherd" in *Pickwick* was apparently reflecting on the scriptural doctrine of the new birth.'

The beginning of the letter to Mr. Jerrold (Fifteenth June) is, as will be readily understood, an imaginary cast of a purely imaginary play. It originated in a proposal of Mr. Webster's—the manager of the Haymarket Theatre—to give five hundred pounds for a prize comedy by an English author. A portion of this letter and of most of the letters addressed to Mr. Jerrold have already been published in Mr. Blanchard Jerrold's life of his father.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, LONDON, *Twenty-first January, 1843.*<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Macvey  
Napier.

MY DEAR SIR,—Let me hasten to say, in the fullest and most explicit manner, that you have acted a most honourable, open, fair, and manly part in the matter of my complaint, for which I beg you to accept my best thanks, and the assurance of my friendship and regard. I would on no account publish the letter you have sent me for that purpose, as I conceive that by doing so, I should not reciprocate the spirit in which you have written to me privately. But if you should, upon consideration, think it not inexpedient to set the *Review* right in regard to this point of fact, by a note in the next number, I should be glad to see it there.

In reference to the article itself, it did, by repeating this statement, hurt my feelings excessively; and is, in this respect, I still conceive, most unworthy of its author. I am at a loss to divine who its author is. I *know* he read in some cut-throat American paper, this and other monstrous statements, which I could at any time have converted into sickening praise by the payment of some fifty dollars. I know that he is perfectly aware that his statement in the *Review* in corroboration of these lies, would be disseminated through the whole of the United States; and that my contradiction

<sup>1</sup> This, and all other Letters addressed to Mr. Macvey Napier, were printed in *Selection from the Correspondence of the late Macvey Napier, Esq.*, editor of the *Edinburgh Review*, edited by his son, Mr. Macvey Napier.

will never be heard of. And though I care very little for the opinion of any person who will set the statement of an American editor (almost invariably an atrocious scoundrel) against my character and conduct, such as they may be; still, my sense of justice does revolt from this most cavalier and careless exhibition of me to a whole people, as a traveller under false pretences, and a disappointed intriguer. The better the acquaintance with America, the more defenceless and more inexcusable such conduct is. For, I solemnly declare (and appeal to any man but the writer of this paper, who has travelled in that country, for confirmation of my statement) that the source from which he drew the 'information' so recklessly put forth again in England, is infinitely more obscene, disgusting, and brutal than the very worst Sunday newspaper that has ever been printed in Great Britain. Conceive the *Edinburgh Review* quoting the *Satirist*, or the *Man about Town*, as an authority against a man with one grain of honour, or featherweight of reputation.

With regard to yourself, let me say again that I thank you with all sincerity and heartiness, and fully acquit you of anything but kind and generous intentions towards me. In proof of which, I do assure you that I am even more desirous than before to write for the *Review*, and to find some topic which would at once please me and you.

Always faithfully yours.

1 DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, YORK GATE, REGENT'S PARK,  
LONDON, *Second March*, 1843.

MY DEAR FELTON,—I don't know where to be-  
gin, but plunge headlong with a terrible splash  
into this letter, on the chance of turning up somewhere.

Professor  
Felton.

Hurrah! Up like a cork again, with the *North American Review* in my hand. Like you, my dear ——, and I can say no more in praise of it, though I go to the end of the sheet. You cannot think how much notice it has attracted here. Brougham called the other day, with the number (thinking I might not have seen it), and I being out at the time, he left a note, speaking of it, and of the writer, in terms that warmed my heart. Lord Ashburton (one of



whose people wrote a notice in the *Edinburgh*, which they have since publicly contradicted) also wrote to me about it in just the same strain. And many others have done the like.

I am in great health and spirits and powdering away at *Chuzzlewit*, with all manner of facetiousness rising up before me as I go on. As to news, I have really none, saving that Forster has been laid up with rheumatism for weeks past, but is now, I hope, getting better. My little captain, as I call him—he who took me out, I mean, and with whom I had that adventure of the cork soles—has been in London too, and seeing all the lions under my escort. Good heavens! I wish you could have seen certain other mahogany-faced men (also captains) who used to call here for him in the morning, and bear him off to docks and rivers and all sorts of queer places, whence he always returned late at night, with rum-and-water tear-drops in his eyes, and a complication of punchy smells in his mouth! He was better than a comedy to us, having marvellous ways of tying his pocket-handkerchief round his neck at dinner-time in a kind of jolly embarrassment, and then forgetting what he had done with it; also of singing songs to wrong tunes, and calling land objects by sea names, and never knowing what o'clock it was, but taking midnight for seven in the evening; with many other sailor oddities, all full of honesty, manliness, and good temper. We took him to Drury Lane Theatre to see *Much Ado about Nothing*. But I never could find out what he meant by turning round, after he had watched the first two scenes with great attention, and inquiring 'whether it was a Polish piece.' . . .

On the fourth of April I am going to preside at a public dinner for the benefit of the printers; and if you were a guest at that table, wouldn't I smite you on the shoulder, harder than ever I rapped the well-beloved back of Washington Irving at the City Hotel in New York!

You were asking me—I love to say asking, as if we could talk together—about Maclise. He is such a discursive fellow, and so eccentric in his might, that on a mental review of his pictures I can hardly tell you of them as leading to

any one strong purpose. But the annual Exhibition of the Royal Academy comes off in May, and then I will endeavour to give you some notion of him. He is a tremendous creature, and might do anything. But, like all tremendous creatures, takes his own way, and flies off at unexpected breaches in the conventional wall.

You know H——'s book, I daresay. Ah! I saw a scene of mingled comicality and seriousness at his funeral some weeks ago, which has choked me at dinner-time ever since. C—— and I went as mourners; and as he lived, poor fellow, five miles out of town, I drove C—— down. It was such a day as I hope, for the credit of nature, is seldom seen in any parts but these—muddy, foggy, wet, dark, cold, and unutterably wretched in every possible respect. Now, C—— has enormous whiskers, which straggle all down his throat in such weather, and stick out in front of him, like a partially unravelled bird's-nest; so that he looks queer at the best, but when he is very wet, and in a state between jollity (he is always very jolly with me) and the deepest gravity (going to a funeral, you know), it is utterly impossible to resist him; especially as he makes the strangest remarks the mind of man can conceive, without any intention of being funny, but rather meaning to be philosophical. I really cried with an irresistible sense of his comicality all the way; but when he was dressed out in a black cloak and a very long black hat-band by an undertaker (who, as he whispered me with tears in his eyes—for he had known H—— many years—was a 'character, and he would like to sketch him'), I thought I should have been obliged to go away. However, we went into a little parlour where the funeral party was, and God knows it was miserable enough, for the widow and children were crying bitterly in one corner, and the other mourners—mere people of ceremony, who cared no more for the dead man than the hearse did—were talking quite coolly and carelessly together in another; and the contrast was as painful and distressing as anything I ever saw. There was an independent clergyman present, with his bands on and a bible under his arm, who, as soon as we were seated, addressed C—— thus, in a loud emphatic voice: 'Mr. C——,



have you seen a paragraph respecting our departed friend, which has gone the round of the morning papers?' 'Yes, sir,' says C——, 'I have,' looking very hard at me the while, for he had told me with some pride coming down that it was his composition. 'Oh!' said the clergyman. 'Then you will agree with me, Mr. C——, that it is not only an insult to me, who am the servant of the Almighty, but an insult to the Almighty, whose servant I am.' 'How is that, sir?' said C——. 'It is stated, Mr. C——, in that paragraph,' says the minister, 'that when Mr. H—— failed in business as a bookseller, he was persuaded by *me* to try the pulpit; which is false, incorrect, unchristian, in a manner blasphemous, and in all respects contemptible. Let us pray.' With which, my dear Felton, and in the same breath, I give you my word, he knelt down, as we all did, and began a very miserable jumble of an extemporary prayer. I was really penetrated with sorrow for the family, but when C—— (upon his knees, and sobbing for the loss of an old friend) whispered me, 'that if that wasn't a clergyman, and it wasn't a funeral, he'd have punched his head,' I felt as if nothing but convulsions could possibly relieve me. . . .

Faithfully always, my dear Felton.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Twenty-seventh April, 1843.*

Mr. Charles  
Babbage.

MY DEAR SIR,—I write to you, *confidentially*, in answer to your note of last night, and the tenor of mine will tell you why.

You may suppose, from seeing my name in the printed letter you have received, that I am favourable to the proposed society. I am decidedly opposed to it. I went there on the day I was in the chair, after much solicitation; and being put into it, opened the proceedings by telling the meeting that I approved of the design in theory, but in practice considered it hopeless. I may tell you—I did not tell them—that the nature of the meeting, and the character and position of many of the men attending it, cried 'Failure' trumpet-tongued in my ears. To quote an expression from Tennyson, I may say that if it were the best society in the world,

the grossness of some natures in it would have weight to drag it down.

In the wisdom of all you urge in the notes you have sent me, taking them as statements of theory, I entirely concur. But in practice, I feel sure that the present publishing system cannot be upset until authors are different men. The first step to be taken is to move as a body in the question of copyright, enforce the existing laws, and try to obtain better. For that purpose I hold that the authors and publishers must unite, as the wealth, business, habits, and interests of that latter class are of great importance to such an end. The Longmans and Murray have been with me proposing such an association. That I shall support. But having seen the Cockspur Street Society, I am as well convinced of its invincible hopelessness as if I saw it written by a celestial penman in the Book of Fate.—My dear Sir,

Always faithfully yours.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Third May*, 1843.

MY DEAR JERROLD,—Let me thank you most cordially for your books, not only for their own sakes (and I have read them with perfect delight), but also for this hearty and most welcome mark of your recollection of the friendship we have established; in which light I know I may regard and prize them.

Mr.  
Douglas  
Jerrold.

I am greatly pleased with your opening paper in the *Illuminated*. It is very wise, and capital; written with the finest end of that iron pen of yours; witty, much needed, and full of truth. I vow to God that I think the parrots of Society are more intolerable and mischievous than its birds of prey. If ever I destroy myself, it will be in the bitterness of hearing those infernal and damnably good old times extolled. Once, in a fit of madness, after having been to a public dinner which took place just as this Ministry came in, I wrote the parody I send you enclosed, for Fonblanque. There is nothing in it but wrath; but that's wholesome, so I send it you.

I am writing a little history of England for my boy, which I will send you when it is printed for him, though your boys are too old to profit by it. It is curious that I have tried



to impress upon him (writing, I daresay, at the same moment with you) the exact spirit of your paper, for I don't know what I should do if he were to get hold of any Conservative or High Church notions; and the best way of guarding against any such horrible results, is, I take it, to wring the parrots' neck in his very cradle.

Oh Heaven, if you could have been with me at a hospital dinner last Monday! There were men there who made such speeches and expressed such sentiments as any moderately intelligent dustman would have blushed through his cindery bloom to have thought of. Sleek, slobbering, bow-paunched, over-fed, apoplectic, snorting cattle, and the auditory leaping up in their delight! I never saw such an illustration of the power of purse, or felt so degraded and debased by its contemplation, since I have had eyes and ears. The absurdity of the thing was too horrible to laugh at. It was perfectly overwhelming. But if I could have partaken it with anybody who would have felt it as you would have done, it would have had quite another aspect; or would at least, like a 'classic mask' (oh d—— that word!) have had one funny side to relieve its dismal features.

Supposing fifty families were to emigrate into the wilds of North America—yours, mine, and forty-eight others—picked for their concurrence of opinion on all important subjects and for their resolution to found a colony of common-sense, how soon would that devil, Cant, present itself among them in one shape or other? The day they landed do you say, or the day after?

That is a great mistake (almost the only one I know) in the *Arabian Nights*, when the Princess restores people to their original beauty by sprinkling them with the golden water. It is quite clear that she must have made monsters of them by such a christening as that.—My dear Jerrold,

Faithfully your Friend.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Eighth May*, 1843.

Mrs.  
Hogarth.            MY DEAR MRS. HOGARTH,—I was dressing to go to church yesterday morning—thinking, very sadly, of that time six years—when your kind note and its

accompanying packet were brought to me. The best portrait that was ever painted would be of little value to you and me, in comparison with that unfading picture we have within us; and of the worst (which ——'s really is) I can only say, that it has no interest in my eyes, beyond being something which she sat near in its progress, full of life and beauty. In that light, I set some store by the copy you have sent me; and as a mark of your affection, I need not say I value it very much. As any record of that dear face it is utterly worthless.

I trace in many respects a strong resemblance between her mental features and Georgina's—so strange a one, at times, that when she and Kate and I are sitting together, I seem to think that what has happened is a melancholy dream from which I am just awakening. The perfect like of what she was, will never be again, but so much of her spirit shines out in this sister, that the old time comes back again at some seasons, and I can hardly separate it from the present.

After she died, I dreamed of her every night for many months—I think for the better part of a year—sometimes as a spirit, sometimes as a living creature, never with any of the bitterness of my real sorrow, but always with a kind of quiet happiness, which became so pleasant to me that I never lay down at night without a hope of the vision coming back in one shape or other. And so it did. I went down into Yorkshire, and finding it still present to me, in a strange scene and a strange bed, I could not help mentioning the circumstance in a note I wrote home to Kate. From that moment I have never dreamed of her once, though she is so much in my thoughts at all times (especially when I am successful, and have prospered in anything) that the recollection of her is an essential part of my being, and is as inseparable from my existence as the beating of my heart is.

Always affectionately.

1 DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, YORK GATE,  
REGENT'S PARK, *Tenth May*, 1843.

SIR,—Permit me to say, in reply to your letter, that you do not understand the intention (I dare-

Mr. David  
Dickson.



say the fault is mine) of that passage in the *Pickwick Papers* which has given you offence. The design of 'the Shepherd' and of this and every other allusion to him is, to show how sacred things are degraded, vulgarised, and rendered absurd when persons who are utterly incompetent to teach the commonest things take upon themselves to expound such mysteries, and how, in making mere cant phrases of divine words, these persons miss the spirit in which they had their origin. I have seen a great deal of this sort of thing in many parts of England, and I never knew it lead to charity or good deeds.

Whether the great Creator of the world and the creature of his hands, moulded in his own image, be quite so opposite in character as you believe, is a question which it would profit us little to discuss. I like the frankness and candour of your letter, and thank you for it. That every man who seeks heaven must be born again, in good thoughts of his Maker, I sincerely believe. That it is expedient for every hound to say so in a snuffing form of words, to which he attaches no good meaning, I do not believe. I take it there is no difference between us.

Faithfully yours.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Thirteenth June, 1843.*

Mr.  
Douglas  
Jerrold.

MY DEAR JERROLD,—Yes, you have anticipated my occupation. *Chuzzlewit* be d—d. High comedy and five hundred pounds are the only matters I can think of. I call it *The One Thing Needful; or, A Part is Better than the Whole*. Here are the characters:

Old Febrile, . . . . .	Mr. FARREN.
Young Febrile (his Son), . . . . .	Mr. HOWE.
Jack Hessians (his Friend), . . . . .	Mr. W. LACY.
Chalks (a Landlord), . . . . .	Mr. GOUGH.
Hon. Harry Staggers, . . . . .	Mr. MELLON.
Sir Thomas Tip, . . . . .	Mr. BUCKSTONE.
Swig, . . . . .	Mr. WEBSTER.
The Duke of Leeds, . . . . .	Mr. COUTTS.
Sir Smivin Growler, . . . . .	Mr. MACREADY.

Servants, Gamblers, Visitors, etc.

Mrs. Febrile, . . . . .	Mrs. GALLOT.
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Lady Tip, . . . . .	Mrs. HUMBY.
Mrs. Sour, . . . . .	Mrs. W. CLIFFORD.
Fanny, . . . . .	Miss A. SMITH.

One scene, where Old Febrile tickles Lady Tip in the ribs, and afterwards dances out with his hat behind him, his stick before, and his eye on the pit, I expect will bring the house down. There is also another point, where Old Febrile, at the conclusion of his disclosure to Swig, rises and says: 'And now, Swig, tell me, have I acted well?' And Swig says: 'Well, Mr. Febrile, have you ever acted ill?' which will carry off the piece.

Herne Bay. Hum. I suppose it's no worse than any other place in this weather, but it is watery rather— isn't it? In my mind's eye, I have the sea in a perpetual state of small-pox; and the chalk running downhill like town milk. But I know the comfort of getting to work in a fresh place, and proposing pious projects to one's self, and having the more substantial advantage of going to bed early and getting up ditto, and walking about alone. I should like to deprive you of the last-named happiness, and to take a good long stroll, terminating in a public-house, and whatever they chanced to have in it. But fine days are over, I think. The horrible misery of London in this weather, with not even a fire to make it cheerful, is hideous.

But I have my comedy to fly to. My only comfort! I walk up and down the street at the back of the theatre every night, and peep in at the green-room window, thinking of the time when 'Dick—ins' will be called for by excited hundreds, and won't come till Mr. Webster (half Swig and half himself) shall enter from his dressing-room, and quelling the tempest with a smile, beseech that wizard, if he be in the house (here he looks up at my box), to accept the congratulations of the audience, and indulge them with a sight of the man who has got five hundred pounds in money, and it's impossible to say how much in laurel. Then I shall come forward, and bow once—twice—thrice—roars of approbation—Brayvo—brarvo—hooray—hoorar—hooroar—one cheer more; and asking Webster home to supper, shall declare eternal friend-



ship for that public-spirited individual.—I am always, my dear Jerrold, faithfully your Friend,

THE CONGREVE OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY  
(which I mean to be called in the Sunday papers).

PS.—I shall dedicate it to Webster, beginning: ‘My dear Sir,—When you first proposed to stimulate the slumbering dramatic talent of England, I assure you I had not the least idea’—etc. etc. etc.

*Eighteenth June, 1843.*

Mr. W. C. Macready. UNHAPPY MAN,—Yes. I am of opinion that in your miserable condition you might extend your remarks, so far, for instance, as to say what you had done in the theatre and tried to do. But whatever is easiest and most comfortable to yourself, will be the best course to take.

You will be expected on the scaffold at half-past twelve. Enquire for the Committee-room, or the Sheriff.

If you have anything on your mind, yet unrevealed, now is the time to throw the weight off your conscience, and make a clean breast.—Sympathetically yours, THE ORDINARY.

From the Chapel of the Jail, Monday Morning.

1 DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Twenty-sixth July, 1843.*

Mr. Clarkson  
Stanfield,  
R.A.

MY DEAR STANFIELD,—I am chairman of a committee, whose object is to open a subscription, and arrange a benefit for the relief of the seven destitute children of poor Elton the actor, who was drowned in the *Pegasus*. They are exceedingly anxious to have the great assistance of your name; and if you will allow yourself to be announced as one of the body, I do assure you you will help a very melancholy and distressful cause. Faithfully always.

1 DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, YORK GATE,  
REGENT'S PARK, *Third August, 1843.*

Lord Morpeth.

DEAR LORD MORPETH,—In acknowledging the safe receipt of your kind donation in behalf of poor Mr. Elton's orphan children, I hope you will suffer me to address you with little ceremony, as the best proof I can

give you of my cordial reciprocation of all you say in your most welcome note. I have long esteemed you and been your distant but very truthful admirer; and trust me that it is a real pleasure and happiness to me to anticipate the time when we shall have a nearer intercourse.—Believe me, with sincere regard,  
Faithfully your Servant.

BROADSTAIRS, KENT, *First September, 1843.*

MY DEAR FELTON,—If I thought it in the na- Professor  
Felton.  
ture of things that you and I could ever agree on paper, touching a certain Chuzzlewitian question whereupon Forster tells me you have remarks to make, I should immediately walk into the same, tooth and nail. But as I don't, I won't. Contenting myself with this prediction, that one of these years and days, you will write or say to me: 'My dear Dickens, you were right, though rough, and did a world of good, though you got most thoroughly hated for it.' To which I shall reply: 'My dear Felton, I looked a long way off and not immediately under my nose.' . . . At which sentiment you will laugh, and I shall laugh; and then (for I foresee this will all happen in my land) we shall call for another pot of porter and two or three dozen of oysters.

Now, don't you in your own heart and soul quarrel with me for this long silence? Not half so much as I quarrel with myself, I know; but if you could read half the letters I write to you in imagination, you would swear by me for the best of correspondents. The truth is, that when I have done my morning's work, down goes my pen, and from that minute I feel it a positive impossibility to take it up again, until imaginary butchers and bakers wave me to my desk. I walk about brimful of letters, facetious descriptions, touching morsels, and pathetic friendships, but can't for the soul of me uncork myself. The post-office is my rock ahead. My average number of letters that *must* be written every day is, at the least, a dozen. And you could no more know what I was writing to you spiritually, from the perusal of the bodily thirteenth, than you could tell from my hat what was going on in my head, or could read my heart on the surface of my flannel waistcoat.



This is a little fishing-place; intensely quiet; built on a cliff, whereon—in the centre of a tiny semicircular bay—our house stands; the sea rolling and dashing under the windows. Seven miles out are the Goodwin Sands (you've heard of the Goodwin Sands?) whence floating lights perpetually wink after dark, as if they were carrying on intrigues with the servants. Also there is a big lighthouse called the North Foreland on a hill behind the village, a severe parsonic light, which reproves the young and giddy floaters, and stares grimly out upon the sea. Under the cliff are rare good sands, where all the children assemble every morning and throw up impossible fortifications, which the sea throws down again at high water. Old gentlemen and ancient ladies flirt after their own manner in two reading-rooms and on a great many scattered seats in the open air. Other old gentlemen look all day through telescopes and never see anything. In a bay-window in a one-pair sits, from nine o'clock to one, a gentleman with rather long hair and no neckcloth, who writes and grins as if he thought he were very funny indeed. His name is Boz. At one he disappears, and presently emerges from a bathing-machine, and may be seen—a kind of salmon-coloured porpoise—splashing about in the ocean. After that he may be seen in another bay-window on the ground-floor, eating a strong lunch; after that, walking a dozen miles or so, or lying on his back in the sand reading a book. Nobody bothers him unless they know he is disposed to be talked to; and I am told he is very comfortable indeed. He's as brown as a berry, and they *do* say is a small fortune to the innkeeper who sells beer and cold lunch. But this is mere rumour. Sometimes he goes up to London (eighty miles or so, away), and then I am told there is a sound in Lincoln's Inn Fields at night, as of men laughing, together with a clinking of knives and forks and wine-glasses.

I never shall have been so near you since we parted aboard the *George Washington* as next Tuesday. Forster, Maclise, and I, and perhaps Stanfield, are then going aboard the Cunard steamer at Liverpool, to bid Macready good-bye, and bring his wife away. It will be a very hard parting. You will see and know him of course. We gave him a splendid

dinner last Saturday at Richmond, whereat I presided with my accustomed grace. He is one of the noblest fellows in the world, and I would give a great deal that you and I should sit beside each other to see him play *Virginius*, *Lear*, or *Werner*, which I take to be, every way, the greatest piece of exquisite perfection that his lofty art is capable of attaining. His *Macbeth*, especially the last act, is a tremendous reality; but so indeed is almost everything he does. You recollect, perhaps, that he was the guardian of our children while we were away. I love him dearly. . . .

You asked me, long ago, about *Maclise*. He is such a wayward fellow in his subjects, that it would be next to impossible to write such an article as you were thinking of about him. I wish you could form an idea of his genius. One of these days a book will come out, *Moore's Irish Melodies*, entirely illustrated by him, on every page. *When* it comes, I'll send it to you. You will have some notion of him then. He is in great favour with the Queen, and paints secret pictures for her to put upon her husband's table on the morning of his birthday, and the like. But if he has a care, he will leave his mark on more enduring things than palace walls.

And so Longfellow is married. I remember *her* well, and could draw her portrait, in words, to the life. A very beautiful and gentle creature, and a proper love for a poet. My cordial remembrances, and congratulations. Do they live in the house where we breakfasted? . . .

I very often dream I am in America again; but, strange to say, I never dream of you. I am always endeavouring to get home in disguise, and have a dreary sense of the distance. *A propos* of dreams, is it not a strange thing if writers of fiction never dream of their own creations; recollecting, I suppose, even in their dreams, that they have no real existence? I never dream of any of my own characters, and I feel it so impossible that I would wager Scott never did of his, real as they are. I had a good piece of absurdity in my head a night or two ago. I dreamed that somebody was dead. I don't know who, but it's not to the purpose. It was a private gentleman, and a particular friend; and I was greatly overcome when the news was broken to me (very delicately) by a gentleman



in a cocked hat, top boots, and a sheet. Nothing else. ‘Good God!’ I said, ‘is he dead?’ ‘He is as dead, sir,’ rejoined the gentleman, ‘as a door-nail. But we must all die, Mr. Dickens, sooner or later, my dear sir.’ ‘Ah!’ I said. ‘Yes, to be sure. Very true. But what did he die of?’ The gentleman burst into a flood of tears, and said, in a voice broken by emotion: ‘He christened his youngest child, sir, with a toasting-fork.’ I never in my life was so affected as at his having fallen a victim to this complaint. It carried a conviction to my mind that he never could have recovered. I knew that it was the most interesting and fatal malady in the world; and I wrung the gentleman’s hand in a convulsion of respectful admiration, for I felt that this explanation did equal honour to his head and heart.

What do you think of Mrs. Gamp? And how do you like the undertaker? I have a fancy that they are in your way. O heaven! such green woods as I was rambling among, down in Yorkshire, when I was getting that done last July! For days and weeks we never saw the sky but through green boughs; and all day long I cantered over such soft moss and turf, that the horse’s feet scarcely made a sound upon it. We have some friends in that part of the country (close to Castle Howard, where Lord Morpeth’s father dwells in state, *in* his park indeed), who are the jolliest of the jolly, keeping a big old country house, with an ale cellar something larger than a reasonable church, and everything, like Goldsmith’s bear dances, ‘in a concatenation accordingly.’ Just the place for you, Felton! We performed some madnesses there in the way of forfeits, picnics, rustic games, inspections of ancient monasteries at midnight, when the moon was shining, that would have gone to your heart, and, as Mr. Weller says, ‘come out on the other side.’ . . .

Write soon, my dear Felton; and if I write to you less often than I would, believe that my affectionate heart is with you always. Loves and regards to all friends, from yours ever and ever.

Very faithfully yours.

BROADSTAIRS, *Sixteenth September*, 1843.

MY DEAR SIR,—I hinted, in a letter of introduction I gave Mr. Hood to you, that I had been thinking of a subject for the *Edinburgh*. Would it meet the purposes of the *Review* to come out strongly against any system of education based exclusively on the principles of the Established Church? If it would, I should like to show why such a thing as the Church Catechism is wholly inapplicable to the state of ignorance that now prevails; and why no system but one, so general in great religious principles as to include all creeds, can meet the wants and understandings of the dangerous classes of society. This is the only broad ground I could hold, consistently with what I feel and think on such a subject. But I could give, in taking it, a description of certain voluntary places of instruction, called ‘the ragged schools,’ now existing in London, and of the schools in jails, and of the ignorance presented in such places, which would make a very striking paper, especially if they were put in strong comparison with the effort making, by subscription, to maintain exclusive Church instruction. I could show these people in a state so miserable and so neglected, that their very nature rebels against the simplest religion, and that to convey to them the faintest outlines of any system of distinction between right and wrong is in itself a giant’s task, before which mysteries and squabbles for forms *must* give way. Would this be too much for the *Review*? Faithfully yours.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Thirteenth October*, 1843.

MY DEAR AINSWORTH,—I want very much to see you, not having had that old pleasure for a long time. I am at this moment deaf in the ears, hoarse in the throat, red in the nose, green in the gills, damp in the eyes, twitchy in the joints, and fractious in the temper from a most intolerable and oppressive cold, caught the other day, I suspect, at Liverpool, where I got exceedingly wet; but I will make prodigious efforts to get the better of it to-night by resorting to all conceivable remedies, and if I succeed so as to be only negatively disgusting to-morrow, I will joyfully

Mr. Macvey  
Napier.Mr.  
William  
Harrison  
Ainsworth.



present myself at six, and bring my womankind along with me.

Cordially yours.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *November 13th*, 1843.

Mr. R. H.  
Horne.

Pray tell that besotted —— to let the opera sink into its native obscurity. I did it in a fit of d——ble good nature long ago, for Hullah, who wrote some very pretty music to it. I just put down for everybody what everybody at the St. James's Theatre wanted to say and do, and that they could say and do best, and I have been most sincerely repentant ever since. The farce I also did as a sort of practical joke, for Harley, whom I have known a long time. It was funny—adapted from one of the published sketches called 'The Great Winglebury Duel,' and was published by Chapman and Hall. But I have no copy of it now, nor should I think they have. But both these things were done without the least consideration or regard to reputation.

I wouldn't repeat them for a thousand pounds apiece, and devoutly wish them to be forgotten. If you will impress this on the waxy mind of —— I shall be truly and unaffectedly obliged to you.

Always faithfully yours.

1844

#### NARRATIVE

In the summer of this year the house in Devonshire Terrace was let, and Charles Dickens started with his family for Italy, going first to a villa at Albaro, near Genoa, for a few months, and afterwards to the Palazzo Peschiere, Genoa. Towards the end of this year he made excursions to the many places of interest in this country, and was joined at Milan by his wife and sister-in-law, previous to his own departure alone on a business visit to England. He had written his Christmas story, *The Chimes*, and was anxious to take it himself to England, and to read it to some of his most intimate friends there.

Mr. Macready went to America and returned in the autumn,

and towards the end of the year he paid a professional visit to Paris.

Charles Dickens' letter to his wife (26th February) treats of a visit to Liverpool, where he went to take the chair on the opening of the Mechanics' Institution and to make a speech on education; he had also presided two evenings previously at a meeting of the Polytechnic Institution at Birmingham. The 'Fanny' alluded to was his sister, Mrs. Burnett; the *Britannia*, the ship in which he and Mrs. Dickens made their outward trip to America; the 'Mrs. Bean,' the stewardess, and 'Hewett,' the captain of that same vessel.

The letter to Mr. Charles Knight was in acknowledgment of the receipt of a prospectus entitled 'Book Clubs for all Readers.' The attempt, which fortunately proved completely successful, was to establish a cheap book club. The scheme was, that a number of families should combine together, each contributing about three halfpennies a week; which contribution would enable them, by exchanging the volumes among them, to have sufficient reading to last the year. The publications, which were to be made as cheap as possible, could be purchased by families at the end of the year, on consideration of their putting by an extra penny a week for that purpose. Charles Dickens, who always had the comfort and happiness of the working-classes greatly at heart, was much interested in this scheme of Mr. Charles Knight's, and highly approved of it. Charles Dickens and this new correspondent became subsequently true and fast friends.

*Martin Chuzzlewit* was dramatised in the early autumn of this year, at the Lyceum Theatre, which was then under the management of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Keeley. Charles Dickens superintended some rehearsals, but had left England before the play was acted in public.

The man 'Roche,' alluded to in his letter to Mr. Maclise, was the French courier engaged to go with the family to Italy. He remained as servant there, and was with Charles Dickens through all his foreign travels. His many excellent qualities endeared him to the whole family, and his master never lost sight of this faithful servant until poor Roche's untimely death in 1849.



## 120 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

The Rev. Edward Tagart was a celebrated Unitarian minister, and a very highly esteemed and valued friend.

The 'Chickenstalker' (letter to Mrs. Dickens, November 8th) is an instance of the eccentric names Charles Dickens was constantly giving to his children, and these names he frequently made use of in his books.

In this year we have the first letter to Sir Edward Lytton Bulwer (afterwards Lord Lytton), and the first letter to Mr. (afterwards Sir Edwin) Landseer, for both of whom Charles Dickens had the highest admiration and personal regard.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, LONDON, *Second January*, 1844.

Professor  
Felton.

MY VERY DEAR FELTON,—You are a prophet, and had best retire from business straightway. Yesterday morning, New Year's Day, when I walked into my little workroom after breakfast, and was looking out of window at the snow in the garden—not seeing it particularly well in consequence of some staggering suggestions of last night, whereby I was beset—the postman came to the door with a knock, for which I denounced him from my heart. Seeing your hand upon the cover of a letter which he brought, I immediately blessed him, presented him with a glass of whisky, inquired after his family (they are all well), and opened the dispatch with a moist and oystery twinkle in my eye. And on the very day from which the new year dates, I read your New Year congratulations as punctually as if you lived in the next house! Why don't you?

Now, if instantly on receipt of this you will send a free and independent citizen down to the Cunard wharf at Boston, you will find that Captain Hewett, of the *Britannia* steamship (my ship), has a small parcel for Professor Felton of Cambridge: and in that parcel you will find a 'Christmas Carol in Prose; being a Ghost Story of Christmas by Charles Dickens.' Over which *Christmas Carol* Charles Dickens wept and laughed and wept again, and excited himself in a most extraordinary manner in the composition; and thinking whereof he walked about the black streets of London, fifteen and twenty miles many a night when all the sober folks had gone to bed. . . . Its success is most prodigious. And by every post all manner of strangers write all manner of letters to him

about their homes and hearths, and how this same *Carol* is read aloud there, and kept on a little shelf by itself. Indeed, it is the greatest success, as I am told, that this ruffian and rascal has ever achieved.

Forster is out again; and if he don't go in again, after the manner in which we have been keeping Christmas, he must be very strong indeed. Such dinings, such dancings, such conjurings, such blindman's-buffings, such theatre-goings, such kissings-out of old years and kissings-in of new ones, never took place in these parts before. To keep the *Chuzzlewit* going, and do this little book, the *Carol*, in the odd times between two parts of it, was, as you may suppose, pretty tight work. But when it was done I broke out like a madman. And if you could have seen me at a children's party at Macready's the other night, going down a country dance with Mrs. M., you would have thought I was a country gentleman of independent property, residing on a tiptop farm, with the wind blowing straight in my face every day. . . .

Your friend, Mr. P——, dined with us one day (I don't know whether I told you this before), and pleased us very much. Mr. C—— has dined here once, and spent an evening here. I have not seen him lately, though he has called twice or thrice; for Kate being unwell and I busy, we have not been visible at our accustomed seasons. I wonder whether Putnam has fallen in your way. Poor Putnam! He was a good fellow, and has the most grateful heart I ever met with. Our journeyings seem to be a dream now. Talking of dreams, strange thoughts of Italy and France, and maybe Germany, are springing up within me as the *Chuzzlewit* clears off. It's a secret I have hardly breathed to any one, but I 'think' of leaving England for a year, next midsummer, bag and baggage, little ones and all—then coming out with *such* a story, Felton, all at once, no parts, sledge-hammer blow.

I send you a Manchester paper, as you desire. The report is not exactly done, but very well done, notwithstanding. It was a very splendid sight, I assure you, and an awful-looking audience. I am going to preside at a similar meeting at Liverpool on the twenty-sixth of next month, and on my way home I may be obliged to preside at another at Birmingham.



I will send you papers, if the reports be at all like the real thing.

I wrote to Prescott about his book, with which I was perfectly charmed. I think his descriptions masterly, his style brilliant, his purpose manly and gallant always. The introductory account of Aztec civilisation impressed me exactly as it impressed you. From beginning to end the whole history is enchanting and full of genius. I only wonder that, having such an opportunity of illustrating the doctrine of visible judgments, he never remarks, when Cortes and his men tumble the idols down the temple steps and call upon the people below to take notice that their gods are powerless to help themselves, that possibly, if some intelligent native had tumbled down the image of the Virgin or patron saint after them, nothing very remarkable might have ensued in consequence.

Of course you like Macready. Your name's Felton. I wish you could see him play Lear. It is stupendously terrible. But I suppose he would be slow to act it with the Boston company.

Hearty remembrances to Sumner, Longfellow, Prescott, and all whom you know I love to remember. Countless happy years to you and yours, my dear Felton, and some instalment of them, however slight, in England, in the loving company of

THE PROSCRIBED ONE.

Oh, breathe not his name!

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Third January, 1844.*

Mr. W. C.  
Macready.

MY VERY DEAR MACREADY,—You know all the news, and you know I love you; so I no more know why I write than I do why I 'come round' after the play to shake hands with you in your dressing-room. I say come, as if you were at this present moment the lessee of Drury Lane, and had —— with a long face on one hand, —— elaborately explaining that everything in creation is a joint-stock company on the other, the inimitable B. by the fire, in conversation with ——. Well-a-day! I see it all, and smell that extraordinary compound of odd scents peculiar to a theatre, which bursts upon me when I swing open the little door in the hall, accompanies me as I meet perspiring supers in the nar-

row passage, goes with me up the two steps, crosses the stage, winds round the third entrance P.S. as I wind, and escorts me safely into your presence, where I find you unwinding something slowly round and round your chest, which is so long that no man can see the end of it.

Oh that you had been at Clarence Terrace on Nina's birthday! Good God, how we missed you, talked of you, drank your health, and wondered what you were doing! Perhaps you are Falkland enough (I swear I suspect you of it) to feel rather sore—just a little bit, you know, the merest trifle in the world—on hearing that Mrs. Macready looked brilliant, blooming, young, and handsome, and that she danced a country dance with the writer hereof (Acres to your Falkland) in a thorough spirit of becoming good humour and enjoyment. Now you don't like to be told that? Nor do you quite like to hear that Forster and I conjured bravely; that a plum-pudding was produced from an empty saucepan, held over a blazing fire kindled in Stanfield's hat without damage to the lining; that a box of bran was changed into a live guinea-pig, which ran between my godchild's feet, and was the cause of such a shrill uproar and clapping of hands that you might have heard it (and I daresay did) in America; that three half-crowns being taken from Major Burns and put into a tumbler-glass before his eyes, did then and there give jingling answers to the questions asked of them by me, and knew where you were and what you were doing, to the unspeakable admiration of the whole assembly. Neither do you quite like to be told that we are going to do it again next Saturday, with the addition of demoniacal dresses from the masquerade shop; nor that Mrs. Macready, for her gallant bearing always, and her best sort of best affection, is the best creature I know. Never mind; no man shall gag me, and those are my opinions.

My dear Macready, the lecturing proposition is not to be thought of. I have not the slightest doubt or hesitation in giving you my most strenuous and decided advice against it. Looking only to its effect at home, I am immovable in my conviction that the impression it would produce would be one of failure, and reduction of yourself to the level of those who do the like here. To us who know the Boston names and honour



them, and who know Boston and like it (Boston is what I would have the whole United States to be), the Boston requisition would be a valuable document, of which you and your friends might be proud. But those names are perfectly unknown to the public here, and would produce not the least effect. The only thing known to the public here is, that they ask (when I say 'they' I mean the people) everybody to lecture. It is one of the things I have ridiculed in *Chuzzlewit*. Lecture you, and you fall into the rolls of Lardners, Vandenhoffs, Eltons, Knowleses, Buckinghams. You are off your pedestal, have flung away your glass slipper, and changed your triumphal coach into a seedy old pumpkin. I am quite sure of it, and cannot express my strong conviction in language of sufficient force.

'Puff-ridden!' why to be sure they are. The nation is a miserable Sindbad, and its boasted press the loathsome, foul old man upon his back, and yet they will tell you, and proclaim to the four winds for repetition here, that they don't need their ignorant and brutal papers, as if the papers could exist if they didn't need them! Let any two of these vagabonds, in any town you go to, take it into their heads to make you an object of attack, or to direct the general attention elsewhere, and what avail those wonderful images of passion which you have been all your life perfecting!

I have sent you, to the charge of our trusty and well-beloved Colden, a little book I published on the 17th of December, and which has been a most prodigious success—the greatest, I think, I have ever achieved. It pleases me to think that it will bring you home for an hour or two, and I long to hear you have read it on some quiet morning. Do they allow you to be quiet, by-the-way? 'Some of our most fashionable people, sir,' denounced me awfully for liking to be alone sometimes.

Now that we have turned Christmas, I feel as if your face were directed homewards, Macready. The downhill part of the road is before us now, and we shall travel on to midsummer at a dashing pace; and, please Heaven, I will be at Liverpool when you come steaming up the Mersey, with that red funnel smoking out unutterable things, and your heart much

fuller than your trunks, though something lighter! If I be not the first Englishman to shake hands with you on English ground, the man who gets before me will be a brisk and active fellow, and even then need put his best leg foremost. So I warn Forster to keep in the rear, or he'll be blown.

If you shall have any leisure to project and put on paper the outline of a scheme for opening any theatre on your return, upon a certain list subscribed, and on certain understandings with the actors, it strikes me that it would be wise to break ground while you are still away. Of course I need not say that I will see anybody or do anything—even to the calling together of the actors—if you should ever deem it desirable. My opinion is that our respected and valued friend Mr. — will stagger through another season if he don't rot first. I understand he is in a partial state of decomposition at this minute. He was very ill, but got better. How is it that — always do get better, and strong hearts are so easy to die?

Look homeward always, as we look abroad to you. God bless you, my dear Macready.

Ever your affectionate Friend.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Fourth January, 1844.*

MY DEAR BLANCHARD,—I cannot thank you Mr. Laman Blanchard. enough for the beautiful manner and the true spirit of friendship in which you have noticed my *Carol*. But I *must* thank you because you have filled my heart up to the brim, and it is running over.

You meant to give me great pleasure, dear fellow, and you have done it. The tone of your elegant and fervent praise has touched me in the tenderest place. I cannot write about it, and as to talking of it, I could no more do that than a dumb man. I have derived inexpressible gratification from what I know was a labour of love on your part. And I can never forget it.

When I think it likely that I may meet you (perhaps at Ainsworth's on Friday?) I shall slip a *Carol* into my pocket and ask you to put it among your books for my sake. You



will never like it the less for having made it the means of so much happiness to me.—Always, my dear Blanchard.

Faithfully your Friend.

ATHENÆUM, *Thursday Afternoon, Twenty-fifth January, 1844.*

Sir Edward  
Bulwer  
Lytton.

MY DEAR SIR EDWARD,—I received your kind cheque yesterday, in behalf of the Elton family; and am much indebted to you on their behalf.

Pray do not believe that the least intentional neglect has prevented me from calling on you, or that I am not sincerely desirous to avail myself of any opportunity of cultivating your friendship. I venture to say this to you in an unaffected and earnest spirit, and I hope it will not be displeasing to you.

At the time when you called, and for many weeks afterwards, I was so closely occupied with my little *Carol* (the idea of which had just occurred to me), that I never left home before the owls went out, and led quite a solitary life. When I began to have a little time and to go abroad again, I knew that you were in affliction, and I then thought it better to wait, even before I left a card at your door, until the pressure of your distress had past.

I fancy a reproachful spirit in your note, possibly because I knew that I may appear to deserve it. But *do* let me say to you that it would give me real pain to retain the idea that there was any coldness between us, and that it would give me heartfelt satisfaction to know the reverse.

I shall make a personal descent upon you before Sunday, in the hope of telling you this myself. But I cannot rest easy without writing it also. And if this should lead to a better knowledge in each of us, of the other, believe me that I shall always look upon it as something I have long wished for.

Always faithfully yours.

LIVERPOOL, RADLEY'S HOTEL,  
*Monday, Twenty-sixth February, 1844.*

Mrs.  
Charles  
Dickens.

MY DEAR KATE,—I got down here last night (after a most intolerably wet journey) before seven, and found Thompson sitting by my fire. He had ordered dinner, and we ate it pleasantly enough, and

went to bed in good time. This morning, Mr. Yates, the great man connected with the Institution (and a brother of Ashton Yates'), called. I went to look at it with him. It is an enormous place. The lecture-room, in which the celebration is held, will accommodate over thirteen hundred people. It was being fitted with gas after the manner of the ring at Astley's. I should think it an easy place to speak in, being a semicircle with seats rising one above another to the ceiling, and will have eight hundred ladies to-night, in full dress. I am rayther shaky just now, but shall pull up, I have no doubt. At dinner-time to-morrow you will receive, I hope, a facetious document hastily penned after I return to-night, telling you how it all went off.

When I came back here, I found Fanny and Hewett had picked me up just before. We all went off straight to the *Britannia*, which lay where she did when we went on board. We went into the old little cabin and the ladies' cabin, but Mrs. Bean had gone to Scotland, as the ship does not sail again before May. In the saloon we had some champagne and biscuits, and Hewett had set upon the table a block of Boston ice, weighing fifty pounds. Scott, of the *Caledonia*, lunched with us—a very nice fellow. He saw Macready play Macbeth in Boston, and gave me a tremendous account of the effect. Poor Burroughs, of the *George Washington*, died on board, on his last passage home. His little wife was with him.

Hewett dines with us to-day, and I have procured him admission to-night. I am very sorry indeed (and so was he) that you didn't see the old ship. It was the strangest thing in the world to go on board again.

I had Bacon with me as far as Watford yesterday, and very pleasant. Sheil was also in the train, on his way to Ireland.

Ever affectionately.

## OUT OF THE COMMON—PLEASE

DICKENS *against* THE WORLD

CHARLES DICKENS, of No. 1 Devonshire Terrace, York Gate, Regent's Park, in the county of Middlesex, gentleman,



the successful plaintiff in the above cause, maketh oath and saith: That on the day and date hereof, to wit at seven o'clock in the evening, he, this deponent, took the chair at a large assembly of the Mechanics' Institution at Liverpool, and that having been received with tremendous and enthusiastic plaudits, he, this deponent, did immediately dash into a vigorous, brilliant, humorous, pathetic, eloquent, fervid, and impassioned speech. That the said speech was enlivened by thirteen hundred persons, with frequent, vehement, uproarious, and deafening cheers, and to the best of this deponent's knowledge and belief, he, this deponent, did speak up like a man, and did, to the best of his knowledge and belief, considerably distinguish himself. That after the proceedings of the opening were over, and a vote of thanks was proposed to this deponent, he, this deponent, did again distinguish himself, and that the cheering at that time, accompanied with clapping of hands and stamping of feet, was in this deponent's case thundering and awful. And this deponent further saith, that his white-and-black or magpie waistcoat, did create a strong sensation, and that during the hours of promenading, this deponent heard from persons surrounding him such exclamations as 'What is it! Is it a waistcoat? No, it's a shirt'—and the like—all of which this deponent believes to have been complimentary and gratifying; but this deponent further saith that he is now going to supper, and wishes he may have an appetite to eat it.

CHARLES DICKENS.

Sworn before me, at the Adelphi  
Hotel, Liverpool, on the Twenty-  
sixth of February, 1844.  
S. RADLEY. }

LIVERPOOL, *Wednesday Night, Twenty-eighth February,*  
*Half-past Ten at night.*

Mr. T. J.  
Thompson.

MY DEAR THOMPSON,—There never were such considerate people as they are here. After offering me unbounded hospitality and my declining it, they leave me to myself like gentlemen. They saved me from all sorts of intrusion at the Town Hall—brought me back—and left

me to my quiet supper (now on the table) as they had left me to my quiet dinner.

I wish you had come. It was really a splendid sight. The Town Hall was crammed to the roof by, I suppose, two thousand persons. The ladies were in full dress and immense numbers; and when Dick showed himself, the whole assembly stood up, rustling like the leaves of a wood. Dick, with the heart of a lion, dashed in bravely. He introduced that about the genie in the casket with marvellous effect; and was applauded to the echo, which did applaud again. He was horribly nervous when he arrived at Birmingham, but when he stood upon the platform, I don't believe his pulse increased ten degrees. A better and quicker audience never listened to man.

The ladies had hung the hall (do you know what an immense place it is?) with artificial flowers all round. And on the front of the great gallery, immediately fronting this young gentleman, were the words in artificial flowers (you'll observe), 'Welcome Boz,' in letters about six feet high. Behind his head, and about the great organ, were immense transparencies representing several Fames crowning a corresponding number of Dicks, at which Victoria (taking out a poetic licence) was highly delighted.

I am going to bed. The landlady is not literary, and calls me Mr. Digzon. In other respects it is a good house.

My dear Thompson, always yours.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Tenth March*, 1844.

MY DEAR LADY BLESSINGTON,—I have made up my mind to 'see the world,' and mean to decamp, Countess of Blessington. bag and baggage, next midsummer for a twelvemonth. I purpose establishing my family in some convenient place, from whence I can make personal ravages on the neighbouring country, and, somehow or other, have got it into my head that Nice would be a favourable spot for head-quarters. You are so well acquainted with these matters, that I am anxious to have the benefit of your kind advice. I do not doubt that you can tell me whether this same Nice be a



healthy place the year through, whether it be reasonably cheap, pleasant to look at and to live in, and the like. If you will tell me, when you have ten minutes to spare for such a client, I shall be delighted to come to you, and guide myself by your opinion. I will not ask you to forgive me for troubling you, because I am sure beforehand that you will do so. I beg to be kindly remembered to Count D'Orsay and to your nieces—I was going to say 'the Misses Power,' but it looks so like the blue board at a ladies' school, that I stopped short.

Very faithfully yours.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Thirteenth March, 1844.*

Mr. T. J.            MY DEAR THOMPSON,—Think of Italy! Don't  
Thompson.        give that up! Why, my house is entered at Phil-  
lips's and at Gillow's to be let for twelve months; my letter of  
credit lies ready at Coutts'; my last number of *Chuzzlewit*  
comes out in June; and the first week, if not the first day in  
July, sees me, God willing, steaming off towards the sun.

Yes. We must have a few books, and everything that is  
idle, sauntering, and enjoyable. We must lie down at the  
bottom of those boats, and devise all kinds of engines for  
improving on that gallant holiday. I see myself in a striped  
shirt, moustache, blouse, red sash, straw hat, and white trous-  
ers, sitting astride a mule, and not caring for the clock, the  
day of the month, or the week. Tinkling bells upon the mule,  
I hope. I look forward to it day and night, and wish the  
time were come. Don't *you* give it up. That's all.

Always, my dear Thompson,  
Faithfully your Friend.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, LONDON, *Sunday, Twenty-fourth March, 1844.*

Mr. T. J.            MY DEAR THOMPSON,—My study fireplace hav-  
Thompson.        ing been suddenly seized with symptoms of insan-  
ity, I have been in great affliction. The bricklayer was called  
in, and considered it necessary to perform an extensive opera-  
tion without delay. I don't know whether you are aware of a  
peculiar bricky raggedness (not unaccompanied by pendent  
stalactites of mortar) which is exposed to view on the removal

of a stove, or are acquainted with the suffocating properties of a kind of accidental snuff which flies out of the same cavernous region in great abundance. It is very distressing. I have been walking about the house after the manner of the dove before the waters subsided for some days, and have no pens or ink or paper. Hence this gap in our correspondence which I now repair.

What are you doing??? When are you coming away???? Why are you stopping there????? Do enlighten me, for I think of you constantly, and have a true and real interest in your proceedings.

D'Orsay, who knows Italy very well indeed, strenuously insists there is no such place for head-quarters as Pisa. Lady Blessington says so also. What do you say? On the first of July! The first of July! Dick turns his head towards the orange groves.

Daniel not having yet come to judgment, there is no news stirring. Every morning I proclaim: 'At home to Mr. Thompson.' Every evening I ejaculate with Monsieur Jacques:<sup>1</sup> 'But he weel come. I know he weel.' After which I look vacantly at the boxes; put my hands to my gray wig, as if to make quite sure that it is still on my head, all safe: and go off, first entrance O.P. to soft music.

Always faithfully your Friend.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Thirtieth April*, 1844.

MY DEAR STANFIELD,—The Sanatorium, or sick house for students, governesses, clerks, young artists, and so forth, who are above hospitals, and not rich enough to be well attended in illness in their own lodgings (you know its objects), is going to have a dinner at the London Tavern on Tuesday, the Fifth of June.

Mr.  
Clarkson  
Stanfield,  
R.A.

The Committee are very anxious to have you for a steward, as one of the heads of a large class; and I have told them that I have no doubt you will act. There is no steward's fee or collection whatever.

<sup>1</sup> A character in a Play, well known at this time.



They are particularly anxious also to have Mr. Etty and Edwin Landseer. As you see them daily at the Academy, will you ask them or show them this note? Sir Martin<sup>1</sup> became one of the Committee some few years ago, at my solicitation, as recommending young artists, struggling alone in London, to the better knowledge of this establishment.

The dinner is to comprise the new feature of ladies dining at the tables with the gentlemen—not looking down upon them from the gallery. I hope in your reply you will not only book yourself, but Mrs. Stanfield and Mary. It will be very brilliant and cheerful I hope. Dick in the chair. Gentlemen's dinner-tickets a guinea as usual; ladies', twelve shillings. I think this is all I have to say, except (which is nonsensical and needless) that I am always

Affectionately yours.

ATHENÆUM, *Monday Morning, Twenty-seventh May, 1844.*

Mr. Edwin  
Landseer,  
R.A.

MY DEAR LANDSEER,—I have let my house with such delicious promptitude, or, as the Americans would say, 'with sich everlass'in slickness and almighty sprydom,' that we turn out to-night! in favour of a widow lady, who keeps it all the time we are away!

Wherefore if you, looking up into the sky this evening between five and six (as possibly you may be, in search of the spring), should see a speck in the air—a mere dot—which, growing larger and larger by degrees, appears in course of time to be an eagle (chain and all) in a light cart, accompanied by a raven of uncommon sagacity, curse that good-nature which prompted you to say it—that you would give them house-room. And do it for the love of                   Boz.

PS.—The writer hereof may be heard on by personal enquiry at No. 9 Osnaburgh Terrace, New Road.

9 OSNABURGH TERRACE, NEW ROAD, *Twenty-eighth May, 1844.*

Mr. Charles  
Babbage.

MY DEAR SIR,—I regret to say that we are placed in the preposterous situation of being obliged to postpone our little dinner-party on Saturday, by reason of having no house to dine in. We have not been

<sup>1</sup> Sir Martin Archer Shee, at this time President of the Royal Academy.

burnt out; but a desirable widow (as a tenant, I mean) proposed, only last Saturday, to take our own house for the whole term of our intended absence abroad, on condition that she had possession of it to-day. We fled, and were driven into this place, which has no convenience for the production of any other banquet than a cold collation of plate and linen, the only comforts we have not left behind us.

My consolation lies in knowing what sort of dinner you would have had if you had come *here*, and in looking forward to claiming the fulfillment of your kind promise when we are again at home.—Always believe me, my dear Sir,

Faithfully yours.

9 OSNABURGH TERRACE, *Fourth June*, 1844.

MY DEAR SIR,—Many thanks for your proof, <sup>Mr. Charles Knight.</sup> and for your truly gratifying mention of my name. I think the subject excellently chosen, the introduction exactly what it should be, the allusion to the International Copyright question most honourable and manly, and the whole scheme full of the highest interest. I had already seen your prospectus, and if I can be of the feeblest use in advancing a project so intimately connected with an end on which my heart is set—the liberal education of the people—I shall be sincerely glad. All good wishes and success attend you!—Believe me always,

Faithfully yours.

9 OSNABURGH TERRACE, *Monday Evening, Twenty-fourth June*, 1844.

MY DEAR SIR,—I cannot, consistently with the <sup>Mr. Robert Keeley.</sup> opinion I hold and have always held, in reference to the principle of adapting novels for the stage, give you a prologue to *Chuzzlewit*. But believe me to be quite sincere in saying that if I felt I could reasonably do such a thing for any one, I would do it for you.

I start for Italy on Monday next, but if you have the piece on the stage, and rehearse on Friday, I will gladly come down at any time you may appoint on that morning, and go through it with you all. If you be not in a sufficiently forward state to render this proposal convenient to you, or



likely to assist your preparations, do not take the trouble to answer this note.

I presume Mrs. Keeley will do Ruth Pinch. If so, I feel secure about her, and of Mrs. Gamp I am certain. But a queer sensation begins in my legs, and comes upward to my forehead, when I think of Tom.

Faithfully yours always.

VILLA DI BAGNARELLO, ALBARO, *Monday, Twenty-second July, 1844.*

Mr. Daniel  
Maclise,  
R.A.

MY VERY DEAR MAC,—I address you with something of the lofty spirit of an exile—a banished commoner—a sort of Anglo-Pole. I don't exactly know what I have done for my country in coming away from it; but I feel it is something—something great—something virtuous and heroic. Lofty emotions rise within me, when I see the sun set on the blue Mediterranean. I am the limpet on the rock. My father's name is Turner, and my boots are green.

Apropos of blue. In a certain picture, called 'The Serenade,' you painted a sky. If you ever have occasion to paint the Mediterranean, let it be exactly of that colour. It lies before me now, as deeply and intensely blue. But no such colour is above me. Nothing like it. In the South of France—at Avignon, at Aix, at Marseilles—I saw deep blue skies (not so deep though—oh Lord, no!), and also in America; but the sky above me is familiar to my sight. Is it heresy to say that I have seen its twin-brother shining through the window of Jack Straw's<sup>1</sup>—that down in Devonshire I have seen a better sky? I daresay it is; but like a great many other heresies, it is true.

But such green—green—green—as flutters in the vineyard down below the windows, *that* I never saw; nor yet such lilac, and such purple as float between me and the distant hills; nor yet—in anything—picture, book, or verbal boredom—such awful, solemn, impenetrable blue, as is that same sea. It has such an absorbing, silent, deep, profound effect, that I can't help thinking it suggested the idea of Styx. It looks as if a draught of it—only so much as you could

<sup>1</sup>The Jack Straw's Castle Inn, at Hampstead.

scoop up on the beach, in the hollow of your hand—would wash out everything else, and make a great blue blank of your intellect.

When the sun sets clearly, then, by Heaven, it is majestic! From any one of eleven windows here, or from a terrace overgrown with grapes, you may behold the broad sea; villas, houses, mountains, forts, strewn with rose leaves—strewn with thorns—stifled in thorns! Dyed through and through and through. For a moment. No more. The sun is impatient and fierce, like everything else in these parts, and goes down headlong. Run to fetch your hat—and it's night. Wink at the right time of black night—and it's morning. Everything is in extremes. There is an insect here (I forget its name, and Fletcher and Roche are both out) that chirps all day. There is one outside the window now. The chirp is very loud, something like a Brobdingnagian grasshopper. The creature is born to chirp—to progress in chirping—to chirp louder, louder, louder—till it gives one tremendous chirp, and bursts itself. That is its life and death. Everything 'is in a concatenation accordingly.' The day gets brighter, brighter, brighter, till it's night. The summer gets hotter, hotter, hotter, till it bursts. The fruit gets riper, riper, riper, till it tumbles down and rots.

Ask me a question or two about fresco—will you be so good? All the houses are painted in fresco hereabouts—the outside walls I mean; the fronts, and backs, and sides—and all the colour has run into damp and green seediness, and the very design has struggled away into the component atoms of the plaster. Sometimes (but not often) I can make out a Virgin with a mildewed glory round her head; holding nothing, in an indiscernible lap, with invisible arms; and occasionally the leg or arms of a cherub, but it is very melancholy and dim. There are two old fresco-painted vases outside my own gate—one on either hand—which are so faint, that I never saw them till last night; and only then because I was looking over the wall after a lizard, who had come upon me while I was smoking a cigar above, and crawled over one of these embellishments to his retreat. There is a church here—



the Church of the Annunciation—which they are now (by ‘they’ I mean certain noble families) restoring at a vast expense, as a work of piety. It is a large church, with a great many little chapels in it, and a very high dome. Every inch of this edifice is painted, and every design is set in a great gold frame or border elaborately wrought. You can imagine nothing so splendid. It is worth coming the whole distance to see. But every sort of splendour is in perpetual enactment through the means of these churches. Gorgeous processions in the streets, illuminations of windows on festanights; lighting up of lamps and clustering of flowers before the shrines of saints; all manner of show and display. The doors of the churches stand wide open; and in this hot weather great red curtains flutter and wave in their places; and if you go and sit in one of these to get out of the sun, you see the queerest figures kneeling against pillars, and the strangest people passing in and out, and vast streams of women in veils (they don’t wear bonnets), with great fans in their hands, coming and going, that you are never tired of looking on. Except in the churches, you would suppose the city (at this time of the year) to be deserted, the people keep so close within doors. Indeed it is next to impossible to get out into the heat. I have only been into Genoa twice myself. We are deliciously cool here, by comparison; being high, and having the sea breeze. There is always some shade in the vineyard, too; and underneath the rocks on the seashore, so if I choose to saunter, I can do it easily, even in the hot time of the day. I am as lazy, however, as—as you are, and do little but eat and drink and read.

As I am going to transmit regular accounts of all sight-seeings and journeying to Forster, who will show them to you, I will not bore you with descriptions, however. I hardly think you allow enough for the great brightness and brilliancy of colour which is commonly achieved on the Continent, in that same fresco painting. I saw some—by a French artist and his pupil—in progress at the cathedral at Avignon, which was as bright and airy as anything can be, —nothing dull or dead about it; and I have observed quite fierce and glaring colours elsewhere.

We have a piano now (there was none in the house), and have fallen into a pretty settled easy track. We breakfast about half-past nine or ten, dine about four, and go to bed about eleven. We are much courted by the visiting people, of course, and I very much resort to my old habit of bolting from callers, and leaving their reception to Kate. Green figs I have already learnt to like. Green almonds (we have them at dessert every day) are the most delicious fruit in the world. And green lemons, combined with some rare hollands that is to be got here, make prodigious punch, I assure you. You ought to come over, Mac; but I don't expect you, though I am sure it would be a very good move for you. I have not the smallest doubt of that. Fletcher has made a sketch of the house, and will copy it in pen-and-ink for transmission to you in my next letter. I shall look out for a place in Genoa, between this and the winter time. In the meantime, the people who come out here breathe delightedly, as if they had got into another climate. Landing in the city, you would hardly suppose it possible that there could be such an air within two miles.

Write to me as often as you can, like a dear good fellow, and rely upon the punctuality of my correspondence. Losing you and Forster is like losing my arms and legs, and dull and lame I am without you. But at Broadstairs next year, please God, when it is all over, I shall be very glad to have laid up such a store of recollections and improvement.

I don't know what to do with Timber. He is as ill-adapted to the climate at this time of the year as a suit of fur. I have had him made a lion dog; but the fleas flock in such crowds into the hair he has left, that they drive him nearly frantic, and render it absolutely necessary that he should be kept by himself. Of all the miserable hideous little frights you ever saw, you never beheld such a devil. Apropos, as we were crossing the Seine within two stages of Paris, Roche suddenly said to me, sitting by me on the box: 'The littel dog 'ave got a great lip!' I was thinking of things remote and very different, and couldn't comprehend why any peculiarity in this feature on the part of the dog should excite a man so much. As I was musing upon it, my ears



were attracted by shouts of 'Hélo! holà! Hi, hi, hi! Le voilà! Regardez!' and the like. And looking down among the oxen—we were in the centre of a numerous drove—I saw him, Timber, lying in the road, curled up—you know his way—like a lobster, only not so stiff, yelping dismally in the pain of his 'lip' from the roof of the carriage; and between the aching of his bones, his horror of the oxen, and his dread of me (who he evidently took to be the immediate agent in and cause of the damage), singing out to an extent which I believe to be perfectly unprecedented; while every Frenchman and French boy within sight roared for company. He wasn't hurt.

Kate and Georgina send their best loves; and the children add 'theirs.' Katey, in particular, desires to be commended to 'Mr. Teese.' She has a sore throat; from sitting in constant draughts, I suppose; but with that exception, we are all quite well.—Ever believe me, my dear Mac,

Your affectionate Friend.

ALBARO, NEAR GENOA, *Friday, Ninth August, 1844.*

Rev.  
Edward  
Tagart.

MY DEAR SIR,—I find that if I wait to write you a long letter (which has been the cause of my procrastination in fulfilling my part of our agreement), I am likely to wait some time longer. And as I am very anxious to hear of you; not the less so, because I hear of you through my brother, who usually sees you once a week in my absence; I take pen in hand and stop a messenger who is going to Genoa. For my main object being to qualify myself for the receipt of a letter from you, I don't see why a ten-line qualification is not as good as one of a hundred lines.

You told me it was possible that you and Mrs. Tagart might wander into these latitudes in the autumn. I wish you would carry out that infant intention to the utmost. It would afford us the truest delight and pleasure to receive you. If you come in October, you will find us in the Palazzo Peschiere, in Genoa, which is surrounded by a delicious garden, and is a most charming habitation in all respects. If you come in September, you will find us less splendidly

lodged, but on the margin of the sea, and in the midst of vineyards. The climate is delightful even now; the heat being not at all oppressive, except in the actual city, which is what the Americans would call considerable fiery, in the middle of the day. But the sea-breezes out here are refreshing and cool every day, and the bathing in the early morning is something more agreeable than you can easily imagine. The orange trees of the Peschiere shall give you their most fragrant salutation if you come to us at that time, and we have a dozen spare beds in that house that I know of! to say nothing of some vast chambers here and there with ancient iron chests in them, where Mrs. Tagart might enact Ginevra to perfection, and never be found out. To prevent which, I will engage to watch her closely if she will only come and see us.

The flies are incredibly numerous just now. The unsightly blot a little higher up was occasioned by a very fine one who fell into the inkstand, and came out, unexpectedly, on the nib of my pen. We are all quite well, thank Heaven, and had a very interesting journey here, of which, as well as of this place, I will not write a word, lest I should take the edge off those agreeable conversations with which we will beguile our walks.

Pray tell me about the presentation of the plate, and whether ——— was very slow, or trotted at all, and if so, when. He is an excellent creature, and I respect him very much, so I don't mind smiling when I think of him as he appeared when addressing you and pointing to the plate, with his head a little on one side, and one of his eyes turned up languidly.

Also let me know exactly how you are travelling, and when, and all about it; that I may meet you with open arms on the threshold of the city, if happily you bend your steps this way. You had better address me 'Poste Restante, Genoa,' as the Albaro postman gets drunk, and when he has lost letters, and is sober, sheds tears—which is affecting, but hardly satisfactory.

As the messenger has just looked in at the door, and shedding on me a balmy gale of onions, has protested against



being detained any longer, I will only say (which is not at all necessary) that I am ever, Faithfully yours.

PS.—There is a little to see here, in the church way, I assure you.

ALBARO, *Saturday Night, Twenty-fourth August, 1844.*

Mr.  
Clarkson  
Stanfield,  
R.A.

Mr. Clarkson Stanfield, R.A.

MY DEAR STANFIELD,—I love you so truly, and have such pride and joy of heart in your friendship, that I don't know how to begin writing to you. When I think how you are walking up and down London in that portly surtout, and can't receive proposals from Dick to go to the theatre, I fall into a state between laughing and crying, and want some friendly back to smite. 'Je-im!' 'Aye, aye, your honour,' is in my ears every time I walk upon the sea-shore here; and the number of expeditions I make into Cornwall in my sleep, the springs of Flys I break, the songs I sing, and the bowls of punch I drink, would soften a heart of stone.

We have had weather here, since five o'clock this morning, after your own heart. Suppose yourself the Admiral in *Black-eyed Susan* after the acquittal of William, and when it was possible to be on friendly terms with him. I am T.P.<sup>1</sup> My trousers are very full at the ankles, my black neckerchief is tied in the regular style, the name of my ship is painted round my glazed hat, I have a red waistcoat on, and the seams of my blue jacket are 'paid'—permit me to dig you in the ribs when I make use of this nautical expression—with white. In my hand I hold the very box connected with the story of Sandomingerbilly. I lift up my eyebrows as far as I can (on the T.P. model), take a quid from the box, screw the lid on again (chewing at the same time, and looking pleasantly at the pit), brush it with my right elbow, take up my right leg, scrape my right foot on the ground, hitch up my trousers, and in reply to a question of yours, namely, 'Indeed, what weather, William?' I deliver myself as follows:

<sup>1</sup> T. P. Cooke, the celebrated actor of William in Mr. Douglas Jerrold's play of *Black-eyed Susan*.

Lord love your honour! Weather! Such weather as would set all hands to the pumps aboard one of your fresh-water cock-boats, and set the purser to his wits' ends to stow away, for the use of the ship's company, the casks and casks of blue water as would come powering in over the gunnel! The dirtiest night, your honour, as ever you see 'atween Spithead at gun-fire and the Bay of Biscay! The wind sou'west, and your house dead in the wind's eye; the breakers running up high upon the rocky heads, the light'us no more looking through the fog than Davy Jones's sarser eye through the blue sky of heaven in a calm, or the blue toplights of your honour's lady cast down in a modest overhauling of her catheads: avast! (*whistling*) my dear eyes; here am I a-goin' head on to the breakers (*bowing*).

ADMIRAL (*smiling*). No, William! I admire plain speaking, as you know, and so does old England, William, and old England's Queen. But you were saying—

WILLIAM. Aye, aye, your honour (*scratching his head*). I've lost my reckoning. Damme!—I ast pardon—but won't your honour throw a hencoop or any old end of towline to a man as is overboard?

ADMIRAL (*smiling still*). You were saying, William, that the wind—

WILLIAM (*again cocking his leg, and slapping the thighs very hard*). Avast heaving, your honour! I see your honour's signal fluttering in the breeze, without a glass. As I was a-saying, your honour, the wind was blowin' from the sou'-west, due sou'-west, your honour, not a pint to larboard nor a pint to starboard; the clouds a-gatherin' in the distance for all the world like Beachy Head in a fog, the sea a-rowling in, in heaps of foam, and making higher than the mainyard arm, the craft a-scuddin' by all taut and under storms'ils for the harbour; not a blessed star a-twinkling out aloft—aloft, your honour, in the little cherubs' native country—and the spray is flying like the white foam from the Jolly's lips when Poll of Portsea took him for a tailor! (*laughs*).

ADMIRAL (*laughing also*). You have described it well, William, and I thank you. But who are these?

*Enters Supers in calico jackets to look like cloth, some in brown holland petticoat-trousers and big boots, all with very large buckles. Last Super rolls on a cask, and pretends to keep it. Other Supers apply their mugs to the bunghole and drink, previously holding them upside down.*



WILLIAM (*after shaking hands with everybody*). Who are these, your honour! Messmates as staunch and true as ever broke biscuit. Ain't you, my lads?

ALL. Aye, aye, William. That we are! that we are!

ADMIRAL (*much affected*). Oh, England, what wonder that—! But I will no longer detain you from your sports, my humble friends (*ADMIRAL speaks very low, and looks hard at the orchestra, this being the cue for the dance*)—from your sports, my humble friends. Farewell!

ALL. Hurrah! hurrah!

[*Exit ADMIRAL.*

VOICE BEHIND. Suppose the dance, Mr. Stanfield. Are you all ready? Go, then!

My dear Stanfield, I wish you would come this way and see me in that Palazzo Peschiere! Was ever man so welcome as I would make you! What a truly gentlemanly action it would be to bring Mrs. Stanfield and the baby. And how Kate and her sister would wave pocket-handkerchiefs from the wharf in joyful welcome! Ah, what a glorious proceeding!

Do you know this place? Of course you do. I won't bore you with anything about it, for I know Forster reads my letters to you; but what a place it is! The views from the hills here, and the immense variety of prospects of the sea, are as striking, I think, as such scenery can be. Above all, the approach to Genoa, by sea from Marseilles, constitutes a picture which you ought to paint, for nobody else can ever do it! William, you made that bridge at Avignon better than it is. Beautiful as it undoubtedly is, you made it fifty times better. And if I were Morrison, or one of that school (bless the dear fellows one and all!), I wouldn't stand it, but would insist on having another picture gratis, to atone for the imposition.

The night is like a seaside night in England towards the end of September. They say it is the prelude to clear weather. But the wind is roaring now, and the sea is raving, and the rain is driving down, as if they had all set in for a real hearty picnic, and each had brought its own relations to the general festivity. I don't know whether you are ac-

quainted with the coastguard men in these parts? They are extremely civil fellows, of a very amiable manner and appearance, but the most innocent men in matters you would suppose them to be well acquainted with, in virtue of their office, that I ever encountered. One of them asked me only yesterday, if it would take a year to get to England in a ship? Which I thought for a coastguardman was rather a tidy question. It would take a long time to catch a ship going there if he were on board a pursuing cutter though. I think he would scarcely do it in twelve months, indeed.

So you were at Astley's t' other night. 'Now, Mr. Stickney, sir, what can I come for to go for to do for to bring for to fetch for to carry for you, sir?' 'He, he, he! Oh, I say, sir!' 'Well, sir?' 'Miss Woolford knows me, sir. She laughed at me!' I see him run away after this; not on his feet, but on his knees and the calves of his legs alternately; and that smell of sawdusty horses, which was never in any other place in the world, salutes my nose with painful distinctness. What do you think of my suddenly finding myself a swimmer? But I have really made the discovery, and skim about a little blue bay just below the town here, like a fish in high spirits. I hope to preserve my bathing-dress for your inspection and approval, or possibly to enrich your collection of Italian costumes on my return. Do you recollect Yarnold in *Masaniello*? I fear that I, unintentionally, 'dress at him,' before plunging into the sea. I enhanced the likeness very much, last Friday morning, by singing a barcarole on the rocks. I was a trifle too flesh-coloured (the stage knowing no medium between bright salmon and dirty yellow), but apart from that defect, not badly made up by any means. I remain out here until the end of September, and send in for my letters daily. There is a postman for this place, but he gets drunk and loses the letters; after which he calls to say so, and to fall upon his knees. About three weeks ago I caught him at a wineshop near here, playing bowls in the garden. It was then about five o'clock in the afternoon, and he had been airing a newspaper addressed to me, since nine o'clock in the morning.

Kate and Georgina unite with me in most cordial remem-



## 144 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

brances to Mrs. and Miss Stanfield, and to all the children. They particularise all sorts of messages, but I tell them that they had better write themselves if they want to send any. Though I don't know that this writing would end in the safe deliverance of the commodities after all; for when I began this letter, I meant to give utterance to all kinds of heartiness, my dear Stanfield; and I come to the end of it without having said anything more than that I am—which is new to you—under every circumstance and everywhere,

Your most affectionate Friend.

PALAZZO PESCHIERE, GENOA, *Fourteenth October, 1844.*

Mr. W. C. Macready. MY VERY DEAR MACREADY,—My whole heart is with you *at home*. I have not yet felt so far off as I do now, when I think of you there, and cannot fold you in my arms. This is only a shake of the hand. I couldn't *say* much to you, if I were home to greet you. Nor can I write much, when I think of you, safe and sound and happy, after all your wanderings.

My dear fellow, God bless you twenty thousand times. Happiness and joy be with you! I hope to see you soon. If I should be so unfortunate as to miss you in London, I will fall upon you, with a swoop of love, in Paris. Kate says all kind things in the language; and means more than are in the dictionary capacity of all the descendants of all the stonemasons that worked at Babel. Again and again and again, my true friend, God bless you!

Ever yours affectionately.

PESCHIERE, GENOA, *Tuesday, Fifth November, 1844.*

Mr. Thomas Mitton. MY DEAR MITTON,—The cause of my not having written to you is too obvious to need any explanation. I have worn myself to death in the month I have been at work. None of my usual reliefs have been at hand; I have not been able to divest myself of the story—have suffered very much in my sleep in consequence—and am so shaken by such work in this trying climate, that I am as nervous as a man who is dying of drink, and as haggard as a murderer.

I believe I have written a tremendous book, and knocked the *Carol* out of the field. It will make a great uproar, I have no doubt.

I leave here to-morrow for Venice and many other places; and I shall certainly come to London to see my proofs, coming by new ground all the way, cutting through the snow in the valleys of Switzerland, and plunging through the mountains in the dead of winter. I would accept your hearty offer with right goodwill, but my visit being one of business and consultation, I see impediments in the way, and insurmountable reasons for not doing so. Therefore, I shall go to an hotel in Covent Garden, where they know me very well, and with the landlord of which I have already communicated. My orders are not upon a mighty scale, extending no further than a good bedroom and a cold shower-bath.

The house is *perfect*; the servants are as quiet and well-behaved as at home, which very rarely happens here, and Roche is my right hand. There never was such a fellow.

We have now got carpets down—burn fires at night—draw the curtains, and are quite wintry. We have a box at the opera, which is close by (for nothing), and sit there when we please, as in our own drawing-room. There have been three fine days in four weeks. On every other the water has been falling down in one continual sheet, and it has been thundering and lightening every day and night.

Ever faithfully.

PS.—Charley has a writing master every day, and a French master. He and his sisters are to be waited on by a professor of the noble art of dancing, next week.

PARMA, ALBERGO DELLA POSTA,  
Friday, Eighth November, 1844.

MY DEAREST KATE,—‘If missis could see us to-night, what would she say?’ That was the brave C.’s remark last night at midnight, and he had reason. We left Genoa, as you know, soon after five on the evening of my departure; and in company with the lady whom you saw, and the dog whom I don’t think you did see, travelled all night at the rate of four miles an hour

Mrs.  
Charles  
Dickens.



over bad roads without the least refreshment until day-break, when the brave and myself escaped into a miserable café while they were changing horses, and got a cup of that drink hot. That same day, a few hours afterwards, between ten and eleven, we came to (I hope) the worst inn in the world, where, in a vast chamber, rendered still more desolate by the presence of a most offensive specimen of what D'Israeli calls the Mosaic Arab (who had a beautiful girl with him), I regaled upon a breakfast, almost as cold, and damp, and cheerless as myself. Then, in another coach, much smaller than a small fly, I was packed up with an old padre, a young Jesuit, a provincial avvocato, a private gentlemen with a very red nose and a very wet brown umbrella, and the brave C., and I went on again at the pace through the mud and rain until four in the afternoon, when there was a place in the coupé (two indeed), which I took, holding that select compartment in company with a very ugly but very agreeable Tuscan 'gent,' who said '*gia*' instead of '*si*,' and rung some other changes in this changing language, but with whom I got on very well, being extremely conversational. We were bound, as you know, perhaps, for Piacenza, but it was discovered that we couldn't get to Piacenza, and about ten o'clock at night we halted at a place called Stradella, where the inn was a series of queer galleries open to the night, with a great courtyard full of wag-gons and horses, and '*velociferi*,' and what not in the centre. It was bitter cold and very wet, and we all walked into a bare room (mine!), with two immensely broad beds on two deal dining-tables, a third great empty table, the usual washing-stand tripod, with a slop-basin on it, and two chairs. And then we walked up and down for three-quarters of an hour or so, while dinner, or supper, or whatever it was, was getting ready. This was set forth (by way of variety) in the old priest's bedroom, which had two more immensely broad beds on two more deal dining-tables in it. The first dish was a cabbage boiled in a great quantity of rice and hot water, the whole flavoured with cheese. I was so cold that I thought it comfortable and so hungry that a bit of cabbage, when I found such a thing floating my way,

charmed me. After that we had a dish of very little pieces of pork, fried with pig's kidneys; after that a fowl; after that something very red and stringy, which I think was veal; and after that two tiny little new-born-baby-looking turkeys, very red and very swollen. Fruit, of course, to wind up, and garlic in one shape or another in every course. I made three jokes at supper (to the immense delight of the company), and retired early. The brave brought in a bush or two and made a fire, and after that a glass of screeching hot brandy and water; that bottle of his being full of brandy. I drank it at my leisure, undressed before the fire, and went into one of the beds. The brave reappeared about an hour afterwards and went into the other; previously tying a pocket-handkerchief round and round his head in a strange fashion, and giving utterance to the sentiment with which this letter begins. At five this morning we resumed our journey, still through mud and rain, and at about eleven arrived at Piacenza; where we fellow-passengers took leave of one another in the most affectionate manner. As there was no coach on till six at night, and as it was a very grim despondent sort of place, and as I had had enough of diligences for one while, I posted forward here in the strangest carriages ever beheld, which we changed when we changed horses. We arrived here before six. The hotel is quite French. I have dined very well in my own room on the second floor; and it has two beds in it, screened off from the room by drapery. I only use one to-night, and that is already made.

It is dull work this travelling alone. My only comfort is in motion. I look forward with a sort of shudder to Sunday, when I shall have a day to myself in Bologna; and I think I must deliver my letters in Venice in sheer desperation. Never did anybody want a companion after dinner so much as I do.

There has been music on the landing outside my door to-night. Two violins and a violoncello. One of the violins played a solo, and the others struck in as an orchestra does now and then, very well. Then he came in with a small tin platter. 'Bella musica,' said I. 'Bellissima musica, signore.'



‘Mi piace moltissimo.’ ‘Sono felice, signore,’ said he. I gave him a franc. ‘O moltissimo generoso. Tanto generoso, signore.’

It was a joke to laugh at when I was learning; but I swear, unless I could stagger on, Zoppa-wise, with the people, I verily believe I should have turned back this morning.

In all other respects I think the entire change has done me undoubted service already. I am free of the book, and am red-faced; and feel marvellously disposed to sleep.

So, for all the straggling qualities of this straggling letter, want of sleep must be responsible. Give my best love to Georgy, and my paternal blessing to

Mamey,  
Katey,  
Charley,  
Wally,  
and  
Chickenstalker.

PS.—Get things in their places. I can’t bear to picture them otherwise.

PPS.—I think I saw Roche sleeping with his head on the lady’s shoulder in the coach. I couldn’t swear it, and the light was deceptive. But I think I did.

CREMONA, *Saturday Night, Sixteenth November, 1844.*

Mr.  
Douglas  
Jerrold.

MY DEAR JERROLD,—As half a loaf is better than no bread, so I hope that half a sheet of paper may be better than none at all, coming from one who is anxious to live in your memory and friendship. I should have redeemed the pledge I gave you in this regard long since, but occupation at one time, and absence from pen and ink at another, have prevented me.

Forster has told me, or will tell you, that I very much wish you to hear my little Christmas book; and I hope you will meet me, at his bidding, in Lincoln’s Inn Fields. I have tried to strike a blow upon that part of the brass countenance of wicked Cant, when such a compliment is sorely needed at this time, and I trust that the result of my training is at

least the exhibition of a strong desire to make it a staggerer. If *you* should think at the end of the four rounds (there are no more) that the said Cant, in the language of *Bell's Life*, 'comes up piping,' I shall be very much the better for it.

I am now on my way to Milan; and from thence (after a day or two's rest) I mean to come to England by the grandest Alpine pass that the snow may leave open. You know this place as famous of yore for fiddles. I don't see any here now. But there is a whole street of coppersmiths not far from this inn, and they throb so d——ably and fitfully, that I thought I had a palpitation of the heart after dinner just now, and seldom was more relieved than when I found the noise to be none of mine.

I was rather shocked yesterday (I am not strong in geographical details) to find that Romeo was only banished twenty-five miles. That is the distance between Mantua and Verona. The latter is a quaint old place, with great houses in it that are now solitary and shut up—exactly the place it ought to be. The former has a great many apothecaries in it at this moment, who could play that part to the life. For of all the stagnant ponds I ever beheld, it is the greenest and weediest. I went to see the old palace of the Capulets, which is still distinguished by their cognisance (a hat carved in stone on the courtyard wall). It is a miserable inn. The court was full of crazy coaches, carts, geese, and pigs, and was ankle-deep in mud and dung. The garden is walled off and built out. There was nothing to connect it with its old inhabitants, and a very unsentimental lady at the kitchen door. The Montagues used to live some two or three miles off in the country. It does not appear quite clear whether they ever inhabited Verona itself. But there is a village bearing their name to this day, and traditions of the quarrels between the two families are still as nearly alive as anything can be, in such a drowsy neighbourhood.

It was very hearty and good of you, Jerrold, to make that affectionate mention of the *Carol* in *Punch*, and I assure you it was not lost on the distant object of your manly regard, but touched him as you wished and meant it should. I wish we had not lost so much time in improving our personal



knowledge of each other. But I have so steadily read you, and so selfishly gratified myself in always expressing the admiration with which your gallant truths inspired me, that I must not call it time lost, either.

You rather entertained a notion, once, of coming to see me at Genoa. I shall return straight, on the ninth of December, limiting my stay in town to one week. Now couldn't you come back with me? The journey, that way, is very cheap, costing little more than twelve pounds; and I am sure the gratification to you would be high. I am lodged in quite a wonderful place, and would put you in a painted room, as big as a church and much more comfortable. There are pens and ink upon the premises; orange trees, gardens, battledores and shuttlecocks, rousing wood-fires for evenings, and a welcome worth having.

Come! Letter from a gentleman in Italy to Bradbury and Evans in London. Letter from a gentleman in a country gone to sleep to a gentleman in a country that would go to sleep too, and never wake again, if some people had their way. You can work in Genoa. The house is used to it. It is exactly a week's post. Have that portmanteau looked to, and when we meet, say, 'I am coming.'

I have never in my life been so struck by any place as by Venice. It is *the* wonder of the world. Dreamy, beautiful, inconsistent, impossible, wicked, shadowy, d——able old place. I entered it by night, and the sensation of that night and the bright morning that followed is a part of me for the rest of my existence. And, oh God! the cells below the water, underneath the Bridge of Sighs; the nook where the monk came at midnight to confess the political offender; the bench where he was strangled; the deadly little vault in which they tied him in a sack, and the stealthy crouching little door through which they hurried him into a boat, and bore him away to sink him where no fisherman dare cast his net—all shown by torches that blink and wink, as if they were ashamed to look upon the gloomy theatre of sad horrors; past and gone as they are, these things stir a man's blood, like a great wrong or passion of the instant. And with these in their minds, and with a museum there, having a

chamber full of such frightful instruments of torture as the devil in a brain fever could scarcely invent, there are hundreds of parrots, who will declaim to you in speech and print, by the hour together, on the degeneracy of the times in which a railroad is building across the water at Venice; instead of going down on their knees, the drivellers, and thanking Heaven that they live in a time when iron makes roads, instead of prison bars and engines for driving screws into the skulls of innocent men. Before God, I could almost turn bloody-minded, and shoot the parrots of our island with as little compunction as Robinson Crusoe shot the parrots in his.

I have not been in bed, these ten days, after five in the morning, and have been travelling many hours every day. If this be the cause of my inflicting a very stupid and sleepy letter on you, my dear Jerrold, I hope it will be a kind of signal at the same time, of my wish to hail you lovingly even from this sleepy and unpromising state.—And believe me as I am,

Always your Friend and Admirer.

MILAN, *Wednesday, Twentieth November, 1844.*

MY DEAR LADY BLESSINGTON,—Appearances Countess of Blessington. are against me. Don't believe them. I have written you, in intention, fifty letters, and I can claim no credit for any one of them (though they were the best letters you ever read), for they all originated in my desire to live in your memory and regard. Since I heard from Count D'Orsay, I have been beset in I don't know how many ways. First of all, I went to Marseilles and came back to Genoa. Then I moved to the Peschiere. Then some people, who had been present at the Scientific Congress here, made a sudden inroad on that establishment, and overran it. Then they went away, and I shut myself up for a month, close and tight, over my little Christmas book, *The Chimes*. All my affections and passions got twined and knotted up in it, and I became as haggard as a murderer, long before I wrote 'The End.' When I had done that, like 'The man of Thessaly,' who having scratched his eyes out in a quickset hedge, plunged into a bramble-bush to scratch them in again, I



fled to Venice, to recover the composure I had disturbed. From thence I went to Verona and to Mantua. And now I am here—just come up from underground, and earthy all over, from seeing that extraordinary tomb in which the dead saint lies in an alabaster case, with sparkling jewels all about him to mock his dusty eyes, not to mention the twenty-franc pieces which devout votaries were ringing down upon a sort of skylight in the cathedral pavement above, as if it were the counter of his heavenly shop. You know Verona? You know everything in Italy, *I* know. The Roman Amphitheatre there delighted me beyond expression. I never saw anything so full of solemn ancient interest. There are the four-and-forty rows of seats, as fresh and perfect as if their occupants had vacated them but yesterday—the entrances, passages, dens, rooms, corridors, the numbers over some of the arches. An equestrian troop had been there some days before, and had scooped out a little ring at one end of the arena, and had their performances in that spot. I should like to have seen it, of all things, for its very dreariness. Fancy a handful of people sprinkled over one corner of the great place (the whole population of Verona wouldn't fill it now); and a spangled cavalier bowing to the echoes, and the grass-grown walls! I climbed to the topmost seat, and looked away at the beautiful view for some minutes; when I turned round, and looked down into the theatre again, it had exactly the appearance of an immense straw hat, to which the helmet in the Castle of Otranto was a baby; the rows of seats representing the different plaits of straw, and the arena the inside of the crown. I had great expectations of Venice, but they fell immeasurably short of the wonderful reality. The short time I passed there went by me like a dream. I hardly think it possible to exaggerate its beauties, its sources of interest, its uncommon novelty and freshness. A thousand and one realisations of the Thousand and one Nights, could scarcely captivate and enchant me more than Venice.

Your old house at Albaro—Il Paradiso—is spoken of as yours to this day. What a gallant place it is! I don't know the present inmate, but I hear that he bought and furnished it not long since, with great splendour, in the French style,

and that he wishes to sell it. I wish I were rich and could buy it. There is a third-rate wine-shop below Byron's house, and the place looks dull and miserable and ruinous enough. Old —— is a trifle uglier than when I first arrived. He has periodical parties, at which there are a great many flower-pots and a few ices—no other refreshments. He goes about, constantly charged with extemporaneous poetry, and is always ready, like tavern dinners, on the shortest notice and the most reasonable terms. He keeps a gigantic harp in his bedroom, together with pen, ink, and paper, for fixing his ideas as they flow, a kind of profane King David, but truly good-natured and very harmless.

Pray say to Count D'Orsay everything that is cordial and loving for me. The travelling purse he gave me has been of immense service. It has been constantly opened. All Italy seems to yearn to put its hand in it. I think of hanging it, when I come back to England, on a nail as a trophy, and of gashing the brim like the blade of an old sword, and saying to my son and heir, as they do upon the stage: 'You see this notch, boy? Five hundred francs were laid low on that day, for post-horses. Where this gap is, a waiter charged your father treble the correct amount—and got it. This end, worn into teeth like the rasped edge of an old file, is sacred to the Custom Houses, boy, the passports, and the shabby soldiers at town-gates, who put an open hand and a dirty coat-cuff into the coach-windows of all "Forestieri." Take it, boy. Thy father has nothing else to give!'

My desk is cooling itself in a mail-coach, somewhere down at the back of the cathedral, and the pens and ink in this house are so detestable, that I have no hope of your ever getting to this portion of my letter. But I have the less misery in this state of mind, from knowing that it has nothing in it to repay you for the trouble of perusal.

Very faithfully yours.

FRIBOURG, *Saturday Night, Twenty-third November, 1844.*

MY DEAREST KATE,—For the first time since I left you I am sitting in a room of my own hiring, with a fire and a bed in it. And I am happy to

Mrs.  
Charles  
Dickens.



say that I have the best and fullest intentions of sleeping in the bed, having arrived here at half-past four this afternoon, without any cessation of traveling, night or day, since I parted from Mr. Bairr's cheap firewood.

The Alps appeared in sight very soon after we left Milan—by eight or nine o'clock in the morning; and the brave C. was so far wrong in his calculations that we began the ascent of the Simplon that same night, while you were travelling (as I would I were) towards the Peschiere. Most favourable state of circumstances for journeying up that tremendous pass! The brightest moon I ever saw, all night, and daybreak on the summit. The glory of which, making great wastes of snow a rosy red, exceeds all telling. We *sledged* through the snow on the summit for two hours or so. The weather was perfectly fair and bright, and there was neither difficulty nor danger—except the danger that there always must be, in such a place, of a horse stumbling on the brink of an immeasurable precipice. In which case no piece of the unfortunate traveller would be left large enough to tell his story in dumb show. You may imagine something of the rugged grandeur of such a scene as this great passage of these great mountains, and indeed Glencoe, well sprinkled with snow, would be very like the ascent. But the top itself, so wild, and bleak, and lonely, is a thing by itself, and not to be likened to any other sight. The cold was piercing; the north wind high and boisterous; and when it came driving in our faces, bringing a sharp shower of little points of snow and piercing it into our very blood, it really was, what it is often said to be, 'cutting'—with a very sharp edge too. There are houses of refuge here—bleak, solitary places—for travellers overtaken by the snow to hurry to, as an escape from death; and one great house, called the Hospital, kept by monks, where wayfarers get supper and bed for nothing. We saw some coming out and pursuing their journey. If all monks devoted themselves to such uses, I should have little fault to find with them.

The cold in Switzerland, since, has been something quite indescribable. My eyes are tingling to-night as one may suppose cymbals to tingle when they have been lustily played.

It is positive pain to me to write. The great organ which I was to have had 'pleasure in hearing' don't play on a Sunday, at which the brave is inconsolable. But the town is picturesque and quaint, and worth seeing. And this inn (with a German bedstead in it about the size and shape of a baby's linen-basket) is perfectly clean and comfortable. Butter is so cheap hereabouts that they bring you a great mass like the squab of a sofa for tea. And of honey, which is most delicious, they set before you a proportionate allowance.

Swiss towns, and mountains, and the Lake of Geneva, and the famous suspension bridge at this place, and a great many other objects (with a very low thermometer conspicuous among them), are dancing up and down me, strangely. But I am quite collected enough, notwithstanding, to have still a very distinct idea that this hornpipe travelling is uncomfortable, and that I would gladly start for my palazzo out of hand without any previous rest, stupid as I am and much as I want it.—Ever, my dear love,

Affectionately yours.

PS.—I hope the dancing lessons will be a success. Don't fail to let me know.

HÔTEL BRISTOL, PARIS, *Thursday Night,*  
*Twenty-eighth November, 1844, Half-past Ten.*

MY DEAREST MACREADY,—Since I wrote to you Mr. W. C. Macready. what would be called in law proceedings the exhibit marked A, I have been round to the Hôtel Brighton, and personally examined and cross-examined the attendants. It is painfully clear to me that I shall not see you to-night, nor until Tuesday, the Tenth of December, when, please God, I shall re-arrive here, on my way to my Italian bowers. I mean to stay all the Wednesday and all the Thursday in Paris. One night to see you act (my old delight when you little thought of such a being in existence), and one night to read to you and Mrs. Macready (if that scamp of Lincoln's Inn Fields has not anticipated me) my little Christmas book, in which I have endeavoured to plant an indignant right-



hander on the eye of certain wicked Cant that makes my blood boil, which I hope will not only cloud that eye with black and blue, but many a gentle one with crystal of the finest sort. God forgive me, but I think there are good things in the little story!

I took it for granted you were, as your American friends say, 'in full blast' here, and meant to have sent a card into your dressing-room, with 'Mr. G. S. Hancock Muggridge, United States,' upon it. But Paris looks coldly on me without your eye in its head, and not being able to shake your hand I shake my own head dolefully, which is but poor satisfaction.

My love to Mrs. Macready. I will swear to the death that it is truly hers, for her gallantry in your absence if for nothing else, and to you, my dear Macready, I am,

Ever a devoted friend.

HÔTEL BRISTOL, PARIS, *Thursday Night,*  
*Twenty-eighth November, 1844.*

Mrs.  
Charles  
Dickens.

MY DEAREST KATE,—I got to Strasburg on Monday night, intending to go down the Rhine. But the weather being foggy, and the season quite over, they could not insure me getting on for certain beyond Mayence, or our not being detained by unpropitious weather. Therefore I resolved (the malle poste being full) to take the diligence hither next day in the afternoon. I arrived here at half-past five to-night, after fifty hours of it in a French coach. I was so beastly dirty when I got to this house, that I had quite lost all sense of my identity, and if anybody had said, 'Are you Charles Dickens?' I should have unblushingly answered, 'No; I never heard of him.' A good wash, and a good dress, and a good dinner have revived me, however; and I can report of this house, concerning which the brave was so anxious when we were here before, that it is the best I ever was in. My little apartment, consisting of three rooms and other conveniences, is a perfect curiosity of completeness. You never saw such a charming little baby-house. It is infinitely smaller than those first rooms we had at Meurice's,

but for elegance, compactness, comfort, and quietude, exceeds anything I ever met with at an inn.

The moment I arrived here, I enquired, of course, after Macready. They said the English theatre had not begun yet, that they thought he was at Meurice's, where they knew some members of the company to be. I instantly despatched the porter with a note to say that if he were there, I would come round and hug him, as soon as I was clean. They referred the porter to the Hôtel Brighton. He came back and told me that the answer there was: 'M. Macready's rooms were engaged, but he had not arrived. He was expected to-night!' If we meet to-night, I will add a postscript. Wouldn't it be odd if we met upon the road between this and Boulogne to-morrow?

I mean, as a recompense for my late sufferings, to get a hackney-carriage if I can and post that journey, starting from here at eight to-morrow morning, getting to Boulogne sufficiently early next morning to cross at once, and dining with Forster that same day—to wit, Saturday. I have notions of taking you with me on my next journey (if you would like to go), and arranging for Georgy to come to us by steamer—under the protection of the English captain, for instance—to Naples; there I would top and cap all our walks by taking her up to the crater of Vesuvius with me. But this is dependent on her ability to be perfectly happy for a fortnight or so in our stately palace with the children, and such foreign aid as the Simpsons. For I love her too dearly to think of any project which would involve her being uncomfortable for that space of time.

You can think this over, and talk it over; and I will join you in doing so, please God, when I return to our Italian bowers, which I shall be heartily glad to do.

They tell us that the landlord of this house, going to London some week or so ago, was detained at Boulogne two days by a high sea, in which the packet could not put out. So I hope there is the greater chance of no such bedevilment happening to me.

Paris is better than ever. Oh dear, how grand it was when I came through it in that caravan to-night! I hope we



## 158 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

shall be very hearty here, and able to say with Wally, 'Han't it plassant!'—Ever, my dearest Kate,

Affectionately yours.

PIAZZA COFFEE HOUSE, COVENT GARDEN,  
Monday, Second December, 1844.

Mrs.  
Charles  
Dickens.

MY DEAREST KATE,—I received, with great delight, your *excellent* letter of this morning. Do not regard this as my answer to it. It is merely to say that I have been at Bradbury and Evans's all day, and have barely time to write more than that I *will* write to-morrow. I arrived about seven on Saturday evening, and rushed into the arms of Mac and Forster. Both of them send their best love to you and Georgy, with a heartiness not to be described.

The little book is now, as far as I am concerned, all ready. One cut of Doyle's and one of Leech's I found so unlike my ideas, that I had them both to breakfast with me this morning, and with that winning manner which you know of, got them with the highest good humour to do both afresh. They are now hard at it. Stanfield's readiness, delight, wonder at my being pleased with what he has done is delicious. Mac's frontispiece is charming. The book is quite splendid.

Anybody who has heard it has been moved in the most extraordinary manner. Forster read it (for dramatic purposes) to A'Beckett. He cried so much and so painfully, that Forster didn't know whether to go on or stop; and he called next day to say that any expression of his feeling was beyond his power. But that he believed it, and felt it to be—I won't say what.

Yours, with true affection.

PS.—If you had seen Macready last night, undisguisedly sobbing and crying on the sofa as I read, you would have felt, as I did, what a thing it is to have power.

COVENT GARDEN, Sunday, Noon (December, 1844).

Countess of  
Blessington.

MY DEAR LADY BLESSINGTON,—Business for other people (and by no means of a pleasant

kind) has held me prisoner during two whole days, and will so detain me to-day, in the very agony of my departure for Italy again, that I shall not even be able to reach Gore House once more, on which I had set my heart. I cannot bear the thought of going away without some sort of reference to the happy day you gave me on Monday, and the pleasure and delight I had in your earnest greeting. I shall never forget it, believe me. It would be worth going to China—it would be worth going to America, to come home again for the pleasure of such a meeting with you and Count D'Orsay—to whom my love, and something as near it to Miss Power and her sister as it is lawful to send. It will be an unspeakable satisfaction to me (though I am not maliciously disposed) to know under your own hand at Genoa that my little book made you cry. I hope to prove a better correspondent on my return to those shores. But better or worse, or any how, I am ever, my dear Lady Blessington, in no common degree, and not with an everyday regard, yours.

Very faithfully yours.

1845

#### NARRATIVE

At the beginning of this year, Charles Dickens was still living at the Palazzo Peschiere, Genoa, with his family. In February he went with his wife to Rome for the Carnival, leaving his sister-in-law and children at Genoa; Miss Hogarth joining them later on at Naples. They all returned to Rome for the Holy Week, and then went to Florence, and so back to Genoa. He continued his residence at Genoa until June of this year, when he returned to England by Switzerland and Belgium, the party being met at Brussels by Mr. Forster, Mr. Maclise, and Mr. Douglas Jerrold, and arriving at home at the end of June. The autumn months, until the first October, were again spent at Broadstairs. And in this September the first amateur play at Miss Kelly's theatre in Dean Street was given, under the management of Charles Dickens, with Messrs. Jerrold, Mark Lemon, John Leech, Gilbert



A'Beckett, Leigh, Frank Stone, Forster, and others as his fellow-actors. The play selected was Ben Jonson's *Every Man in his Humour*, in which Charles Dickens acted Captain Bobadil. The first performance was a private one, merely as an entertainment for the actors and their friends, but its success speedily led to a repetition of the same performance, and afterwards to many other performances for public and charitable objects. *Every Man in his Humour* was shortly after repeated, at the same little theatre, for a useful charity which needed help; and later in the year Beaumont and Fletcher's play of *The Elder Brother* was given by the same company, at the same place, for the benefit of Miss Kelly. There was a farce played after the comedy on each occasion—not always the same one—in which Charles Dickens and Mr. Mark Lemon were the principal actors.

The letters which we have for this year refer, with very few exceptions, to these theatricals, and therefore need no explanation.

Charles Dickens was at work at the end of this year on another Christmas book, *The Cricket on the Hearth*, and was also much occupied with the project of the *Daily News* paper, of which he undertook the editorship at its starting, which took place in the beginning of the following year, 1846.

ROME, Tuesday, Fourth February, 1845.

Miss  
Hogarth.

MY DEAREST GEORGY,—This is a very short note, but time is still shorter. Come by the first boat by all means. If there be a good one a day or two before it, come by that. Don't delay on any account. I am very sorry you are not here. The Carnival is a very remarkable and beautiful sight. I have been regretting the having left you at home all the way here.

Kate says will you take counsel with Charlotte about colour (I put in my word, as usual, for brightness), and have the darlings' bonnets made at once, by the same artist as before? Kate would have written, but is gone with Black to a day performance at the opera, to see Cerito dance. At two o'clock each day we sally forth in an open carriage, with

a large sack of sugar-plums and at least five hundred little nosegays to pelt people with. I should think we threw away, yesterday, a thousand of the latter. We had the carriage filled with flowers three or four times. I wish you could have seen me catch a swell brigand on the nose with a handful of very large confetti every time we met him. It was the best thing I have ever done. *The Chimes* are nothing to it.—Anxiously expecting you, I am ever, dear Georgy,

Yours most affectionately.

NAPLES, Monday, Seventeenth February, 1845.

MY DEAR MITTON,—This will be a hasty letter, for I am as badly off in this place as in America —beset by visitors at all times and seasons, and forced to dine out every day. I have found, however, an excellent man for me—an Englishman, who has lived here many years and is well acquainted with *the people*, whom he doctored in the bad time of the cholera, when the priests and everybody else fled in terror.

Mr.  
Thomas  
Mitton.

Under his auspices I have got to understand the low life of Naples (among the fishermen and idlers) almost as well as I understand the do. do. of my own country; always excepting the language, which is very peculiar and extremely difficult, and would require a year's constant practice at least. It is no more like Italian than English is to Welsh. And as they don't say half of what they mean, but make a wink or a kick stand for a whole sentence, it's a marvel to me how they comprehend each other. At Rome they speak beautiful Italian (I am pretty strong at that, I believe); but they are worse here than in Genoa, which I had previously thought impossible.

It is a fine place, but nothing like so beautiful as people make it out to be. The famous bay is, to my thinking, as a piece of scenery, immeasurably inferior to the Bay of Genoa, which is the most lovely thing I have ever seen. The city, in like manner, will bear no comparison with Genoa. But there is none in Italy that will, except Venice. As to houses, there is no palace like the Peschiere for architecture, situation, gardens, or rooms. It is a great triumph to me, too,



to find how cheap it is. At Rome, the English people live in dirty little fourth, fifth, and sixth floors, with not one room as large as your own drawing-room, and pay, commonly, seven or eight pounds a week.

I was a week in Rome on my way here, and saw the Carnival, which is perfectly delirious, and a great scene for a description. All the ancient part of Rome is wonderful and impressive in the extreme, far beyond the possibility of exaggeration. As to the modern part, it might be anywhere or anything—Paris, Nice, Boulogne, Calais, or one of a thousand other places.

The weather is so atrocious (rain, snow, wind, darkness, hail, and cold) that I can't get over into Sicily. But I don't care very much about it, as I have planned out ten days of excursion into the neighbouring country. One thing of course—the ascent of Vesuvius. Herculaneum and Pompeii are more full of interest and wonder than it is possible to imagine. I have heard of some ancient tombs (quite unknown to travellers) dug in the bowels of the earth, and extending for some miles underground. They are near a place called Viterbo, on the way from Rome to Florence. I shall lay in a small stock of torches, etc., and explore them when I leave Rome. I return there on the first of March, and shall stay there nearly a month.

*Saturday, February 22nd.*—Since I left off as above, I have been away on an excursion of three days. Yesterday evening, at four o'clock, we began (a small party of six) the ascent of Mount Vesuvius, with six saddle-horses, an armed soldier for a guard, and twenty-two guides; the latter rendered necessary by the severity of the weather, which is greater than has been known for twenty years, and has covered the precipitous part of the mountain with deep snow, the surface of which is glazed with one smooth sheet of ice from the top of the cone to the bottom. By starting at that hour I intended to catch the sunset about halfway up, and night at the top, where the fire is raging. It was an inexpressibly lovely night without a cloud; and when the day was quite gone, the moon (within a few hours of the full) came proudly up, showing the sea, and the Bay of Naples,

and the whole country in such majesty as no words can express. We rode to the beginning of the snow and then dismounted. Catherine and Georgina were put into two litters, just chairs with poles, like those in use in England on the 5th of November; and a fat Englishman, who was of the party, was hoisted into a third borne by eight men. I was accommodated with a tough stick, and we began to plough our way up. The ascent as steep as this line /—very nearly perpendicular. We were all tumbling at every step; and looking up and seeing the people in advance tumbling over one's very head, and looking down and seeing hundreds of feet of smooth ice below, was, I must confess, anything but agreeable. However, I knew there was little chance of another clear night before I leave this, and gave the word to get up somehow or other. So on we went, winding a little now and then, or we should not have got on at all. By prodigious exertions we passed the region of snow and came into that of fire—desolate and awful you may well suppose. It was like working one's way through a dry waterfall, with every mass of stone burnt and charred into enormous cinders, and smoke and sulphur bursting out of every chink and crevice, so that it was difficult to breathe. High before us, bursting out of a hill at the top of the mountain, shaped like this **A**, the fire was pouring out, reddening the night with flames, blackening it with smoke, and spotting it with red-hot stones and cinders that fell down again in showers. At every step everybody fell, now into a hot chink, now into a bed of ashes, now over a mass of cindered iron; and the confusion in the darkness (for the smoke obscured the moon in this part), and the quarrelling and shouting and roaring of the guides, and the waiting every now and then for somebody who was not to be found, and was supposed to have stumbled into some pit or other, made such a scene of it as I can give you no idea of. My ladies were now on foot, of course; but we dragged them on as well as we could (they were thorough game, and didn't make the least complaint), until we got to the foot of that topmost hill I have drawn so beautifully. Here we all stopped; but the head guide, an English gentleman of the name of Le Gros—who has been here many years, and has



been up the mountain a hundred times—and your humble servant, resolved (like jackasses) to climb that hill to the brink and look into the crater itself. You may form some notion of what is going on inside it, when I tell you that it is a hundred feet higher than it was six weeks ago. The sensation of struggling up it, choked with the fire and smoke, and feeling at every step as if the crust of ground between one's feet and the gulf of fire would crumble in and swallow one up (which is the real danger), I shall remember for some little time, I think. But we did it. We looked down into the flaming bowels of the mountain and came back again, alight in half a dozen places, and burnt from head to foot. You never saw such devils. And I never saw anything so awful and terrible..

Roche had been tearing his hair like a madman, and crying that we should all three be killed, which made the rest of the company very comfortable, as you may suppose. But we had some wine in a basket, and all swallowed a little of that and a great deal of sulphur before we began to descend. The usual way, after the fiery part is past—you will understand that to be all the flat top of the mountain, in the centre of which, again, rises the little hill I have drawn—is to slide down the ashes, which, slipping from under you, make a gradually increasing ledge under your feet, and prevent your going too fast. But when we came to this steep place last night, we found nothing there but one smooth solid sheet of ice. The only way to get down was for the guides to make a chain, holding by each other's hands, and beat a narrow track in it into the snow below with their sticks. My two unfortunate ladies were taken out of their litters again, with half a dozen men hanging on to each, to prevent their falling forward; and we began to descend this way. It was like a tremendous dream. It was impossible to stand, and the only way to prevent oneself from going sheer down the precipice, every time one fell, was to drive one's stick into one of the holes the guides had made, and hold on by that. Nobody could pick one up, or stop one, or render one the least assistance. Now, conceive my horror, when this Mr. Le Gros I have mentioned, being on one side of Georgina

and I on the other, suddenly staggers away from the narrow path on to the smooth ice, gives us a jerk, lets go, and plunges headforemost down the smooth ice into the black night, five hundred feet below! Almost at the same instant, a man far behind, carrying a light basket on his head with some of our spare cloaks in it, misses his footing and rolls down in another place; and after him, rolling over and over like a black bundle, goes a boy, shrieking as nobody but an Italian can shriek, until the breath is tumbled out of him.

The Englishman is in bed to-day, terribly bruised but without any broken bones. He was insensible at first and a mere heap of rags; but we got him before the fire, in a little hermitage there is halfway down, and he so far recovered as to be able to take some supper, which was waiting for us there. The boy was brought in with his head tied up in a bloody cloth, about half an hour after the rest of us were assembled. And the man who had had the basket was not found when we left the mountain at midnight. What became of the cloaks (mine was among them) I know as little. My ladies' clothes were so torn off their backs that they would not have been decent, if there could have been any thought of such things at such a time. And when we got down to the guides' house, we found a French surgeon (one of another party who had been up before us) lying on a bed in a stable, with God knows what horrible breakage about him, but suffering acutely and looking like death. A pretty unusual trip for a pleasure expedition, I think!

I am rather stiff to-day, but am quite unhurt, except a slight scrape on my right hand. My clothes are burnt to pieces. My ladies are the wonder of Naples, and everybody is open-mouthed.

Ever faithfully.

GENOA, *Ninth May*, 1845.

MY DEAR LADY BLESSINGTON,—Once more in my old quarters, and with rather a tired sole to my foot, from having found such an immense number of different resting-places for it since I went away. I write you my last Italian letter for this bout, designing to leave here, please God, on the ninth of next month, and to be in London

Countess of  
Blessington.



again by the end of June. I am looking forward with great delight to the pleasure of seeing you once more, and mean to come to Gore House with such a swoop as shall astonish the poodle, if, after being accustomed to his own size and sense, he retain the power of being astonished at anything in the wide world. You know where I have been, and every mile of ground I have travelled over, and every object I have seen. It is next to impossible, surely, to exaggerate the interest of Rome; though, I think, it is very possible to find the main source of interest in the wrong things. Naples disappointed me greatly. The weather was bad during a great part of my stay there. But if I had not had mud, I should have had dust, and though I had had sun, I must still have had the Lazzaroni. And they are so ragged, so dirty, so abject, so full of degradation, so sunken and steeped in the hopelessness of better things, that they would make heaven uncomfortable, if they could ever get there. I didn't expect to see a handsome city, but I expected something better than that long dull line of squalid houses, which stretches from the Chiaja to the quarter of the Porta Capuana; and while I was quite prepared for a miserable populace, I had some dim belief that there were bright rays among them, and dancing legs, and shining sun-browned faces. Whereas the honest truth is, that connected with Naples itself, I have not one solitary recollection. The country round it charmed me, I need not say. Who can forget Herculaneum and Pompeii?

As to Vesuvius, it burns away in my thoughts, beside the roaring waters of Niagara, and not a splash of the water extinguishes a spark of the fire; but there they go on, tumbling and flaming night and day, each in its fullest glory.

I have seen so many wonders, and each of them has such a voice of its own, that I sit all day long listening to the roar they make as if it were in a sea-shell, and have fallen into an idleness so complete, that I can't rouse myself sufficiently to go to Pisa on the twenty-fifth, when the triennial illumination of the Cathedral and Leaning Tower, and Bridges, and what not, takes place. But I have already been there; and it cannot beat St. Peter's, I suppose. So I don't think I shall pluck myself up by the roots, and go

aboard a steamer for Leghorn. Let me thank you heartily for the *Keepsake* and the *Book of Beauty*. They reached me a week or two ago. I have been very much struck by two papers in them—one, Landor's 'Conversations,' among the most charming, profound, and delicate productions I have ever read; the other, your lines on Byron's room at Venice. I am as sure that you wrote them from your heart, as I am that they found their way immediately to mine.

It delights me to receive such accounts of Maclise's fresco. If he will only give his magnificent genius fair play, there is not enough cant and dulness even in the criticism of art from which Sterne prayed kind heaven to defend him, as the worst of all the cants continually canted in this canting world—to keep the giant down an hour.

Our poor friend, the naval governor,<sup>1</sup> has lost his wife, I am sorry to hear, since you and I spoke of his pleasant face. Do not let your nieces forget me, if you can help it, and give my love to Count D'Orsay, with many thanks to him for his charming letter. I was greatly amused by his account of ——. There was a cold shade of aristocracy about it, and a dampness of cold water, which entertained me beyond measure.

Always faithfully yours.

1 DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Twenty-eighth July, 1845.*

MY DEAR SIR,—As my note is to bear reference to business, I will make it as short and plain as I can. I think I could write a pretty good and a well-timed article on the *Punishment of Death*, and sympathy with great criminals, instancing the gross and depraved curiosity that exists in reference to them, by some of the outrageous things that were written, done, and said in recent cases. But as I am not sure that my views would be yours, and as their statement would be quite inseparable from such a paper, I will briefly set down their purport that you may decide for yourself.

Society, having arrived at that state in which it spares bodily torture to the worst criminals, and having agreed, if

<sup>1</sup> Lieut. Tracey, R.N., who was at this time Governor of Tothill Fields Prison.



criminals be put to death at all, to kill them in the speediest way, I consider the question with reference to society, and not at all with reference to the criminal, holding that in a case of cruel and deliberate murder, he is already mercifully and sparingly treated. But, as a question for the deliberate consideration of all reflective persons, I put this view of the case. With such very repulsive and odious details before us, may it not be well to inquire whether the punishment of death be beneficial to society? I believe it to have a horrible fascination for many of those persons who render themselves liable to it, impelling them onward to the acquisition of a frightful notoriety; and (setting aside the strong confirmation of this idea afforded in individual instances) I presume this to be the case in very badly regulated minds, when I observe the strange fascination which everything connected with this punishment, or the object of it, possesses for tens of thousands of decent, virtuous, well-conducted people, who are quite unable to resist the published portraits, letters, anecdotes, smilings, snuff-takings, of the bloodiest and most unnatural scoundrel with the gallows before him. I observe that this strange interest does not prevail to anything like the same degree where death is not the penalty. Therefore I connect it with the dread and mystery surrounding death in any shape, but especially in this avenging form, and am disposed to come to the conclusion that it produces crime in the criminally disposed, and engenders a diseased sympathy—morbid and bad, but natural and often irresistible—among the well-conducted and gentle. Regarding it as doing harm to both these classes, it may even then be right to enquire, whether it has any salutary influence on those small knots and specks of people, mere bubbles in the living ocean, who actually behold its infliction with their proper eyes. On this head it is scarcely possible to entertain a doubt, for we know that robbery, and obscenity, and callous indifference are of no commoner occurrence anywhere than at the foot of the scaffold. Furthermore, we know that all exhibitions of agony and death have a tendency to brutalise and harden the feelings of men, and have always been the most rife among the fiercest people. Again, it is a great question whether igno-

rant and dissolute persons (ever the great body of spectators, as few others will attend), seeing *that* murder done, and not having seen the other, will not, almost of necessity, sympathise with the man who dies before them, especially as he is shown, a martyr to their fancy, tied and bound, alone among scores, with every kind of odds against him.

I should take all these threads up at the end by a vivid little sketch of the origin and progress of such a crime as Hocker's, stating a somewhat parallel case, but an imaginary one, pursuing its hero to his death, and showing what enormous harm he does *after* the crime for which he suffers. I should state none of these positions in a positive sledgehammer way, but tempt and lure the reader into the discussion of them in his own mind; and so we come to this at last—whether it be for the benefit of society to elevate even this crime to the awful dignity and notoriety of death; and whether it would not be much more to its advantage to substitute a mean and shameful punishment, degrading the deed and the committer of the deed, and leaving the general compassion to expend itself upon the only theme at present quite forgotten in the history, that is to say, the murdered person.

I do not give you this as an outline of the paper, which I think I could make attractive. It is merely an exposition of the inferences to which its whole philosophy must tend.

Always faithfully yours.

ALBION HOTEL, BROADSTAIRS, *Sunday, Seventeenth August, 1845.*

MY DEAR MACREADY,—In reference to Bruce <sup>Mr. W. C.</sup> Castle School, I think the question set at rest <sup>Macready.</sup> most probably by the fact of there being no vacancy (it is always full) until Christmas, when Howitt's two boys and Jerrold's one go in and fill it up again. But after going carefully through the school, a question would arise in my mind whether the system—a perfectly admirable one; the only recognition of education as a broad system of moral and intellectual philosophy, that I have ever seen in practice—do not require so much preparation and progress in the mind of the boy, as that he shall have come there younger



and less advanced than Willy;<sup>1</sup> or at all events without that very different sort of school experience which he must have acquired at Brighton. I have no warrant for this doubt, beyond a vague uneasiness suggesting a suspicion of its great probability. On such slight ground I would not hint it to any one but you, who I know will give it its due weight, and no more and no less.

I have the paper setting forth the nature of the higher classical studies, and the books they read. It is the usual course, and includes the great books in Greek and Latin. They have a miscellaneous library, under the management of the boys themselves, of some five or six thousand volumes, and every means of study and recreation, and every inducement to self-reliance and self-exertion that can easily be imagined. As there is no room just now, you can turn it over in your mind again. And if you would like to see the place yourself, when you return to town, I shall be delighted to go there with you. I come home on Wednesday.—Ever, my dear Macready,

Affectionately yours.

*Twenty-seventh August, 1845.*

Mr. George  
Cattermole.

MY DEAR GEORGE,—I write a line to tell you a project we have in view. A little party of us have taken Miss Kelly's theatre for the night of the twentieth of next month, and we are going to act a play there, with correct and pretty costume, good orchestra, etc. etc. The affair is strictly private. The admission will be by cards of invitation; every man will have from thirty to thirty-five. Nobody can ask any person without the knowledge and sanction of the rest, my objection being final; and the expense to each (exclusive of the dress, which every man finds for himself) will not exceed two guineas. Forster plays, and Stone plays, and I play, and some of the *Punch* people play. Stanfield, having the scenery and carpenters to attend to, cannot manage his part also. It is Downright, in *Every Man in his Humour*, not at all long, but very good;

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Macready's eldest son.

he wants you to take it. And so help me. We shall have a brilliant audience. The uphill part of the thing is already done, our next rehearsal is next Tuesday, and if you will come in you will find everything to your hand, and all very merry and pleasant.

Let me know what you decide, like a Kittenmolian Trojan.—Believe me ever, Heartily yours.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Thursday, Eighteenth September, 1845.*

Mr. W. C. MY DEAR MACREADY,—We have a little supper, sir, after the farce, at No. 9 Powis Place, Great Ormond Street, in an empty house, belonging to one of the company. There I am requested by my fellows to beg the favour of thy company and that of Mrs. Macready. The guests are limited to the actors and their ladies—with the exception of yourselves, and D'Orsay, and George Cattermole, 'or so'—that sounds like Bobadil a little.

I am going to adopt your reading of the fifth act with the worst grace in the world. It seems to me that you don't allow enough for Bobadil having been frequently beaten before, as I have no doubt he had been. The part goes down hideously on this construction, and the end is mere lees. But never mind, sir, I intend bringing you up with the farce in the most brilliant manner. Ever yours affectionately.

*N.B.*—Observe. I think of changing my present mode of life, and am open to an engagement.

*N.B.* No. 2.—I will undertake not to play tragedy, though passion is my strength.

*N.B.* No. 3.—I consider myself a chained lion.<sup>1</sup>

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Second October, 1845.*

MY DEAR STANNY,—I send you the claret jug. But for a mistake, you would have received the little remembrance almost immediately after my return from abroad.

Mr.  
Clarkson  
Stanfield,  
R.A.

<sup>1</sup> This alludes to a theatrical story of a second-rate actor, who described himself as a 'chained lion,' in a theatre where he had to play inferior parts to Mr. Macready.



I need not say how much I should value another little sketch from your extraordinary hand in this year's small volume, to which Mac again does the frontispiece. But I cannot hear of it, and will not have it (though the gratification of such aid, to me, is really beyond all expression), unless you will so far consent to make it a matter of business as to receive, without asking any questions, a cheque in return from the publishers. Do not misunderstand me—though I am not afraid there is much danger of your doing so, for between us misunderstanding is, I hope, not easy. I know perfectly well that nothing can pay you for the devotion of any portion of your time to such a use of your art. I know perfectly well that no terms would induce you to go out of your way, in such a regard, for perhaps anybody else. I cannot, nor do I desire to, vanquish the friendly obligation which help from you imposes on me. But I am not the sole proprietor of these little books; and it would be monstrous in you if you were to dream of putting a scratch into a second one without some shadowy reference to the other partners, ten thousand times more monstrous in me if any consideration on earth could induce me to permit it, which nothing will or shall.

So, see what it comes to. If you will do me a favour on my terms it will be more acceptable to me, my dear Stanfield, than I can possibly tell you. If you will not be so generous, you deprive me of the satisfaction of receiving it at your hands, and shut me out from that possibility altogether. What a stony-hearted ruffian you must be in such a case!

Ever affectionately yours.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Seventeenth October*, 1845.

Mr. T. J.  
Thompson.

MY DEAR THOMPSON,—Roche has not returned; and from what I hear of your movements, I fear I cannot answer for his being here in time for you.

I enclose you, lest I should forget it, the letter to the Peschiere agent. He is the Marquis Pallavicini's man of business, and speaks the most abominable Genoese ever heard. He is a rascal of course; but a more reliable villain, in his way, than the rest of his kind.

You recollect what I told you of the Swiss banker's wife, the English lady? <sup>1</sup> If you would like Christiana <sup>2</sup> to have a friend at Genoa in the person of a most affectionate and excellent little woman, and if you would like to have a resource in the most elegant and comfortable family there, I need not say that I shall be delighted to give you a letter to those who would die to serve me. Always yours.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Friday Evening, Seventeenth October, 1845.*

MY DEAR MACREADY,—You once—only once <sup>Mr. W. C. Macready.</sup>—gave the world assurance of a waistcoat. You wore it, sir, I think, in *Money*. It was a remarkable and precious waistcoat, wherein certain broad stripes of blue or purple disported themselves as by a combination of extraordinary circumstances, too happy to occur again. I have seen it on your manly chest in private life. I saw it, sir, I think, the other day in the cold light of morning—with feelings easier to be imagined than described. Mr. Macready, sir, are you a father? If so, lend me that waistcoat for five minutes. I am bidden to a wedding (where fathers are made), and my artist cannot, I find (how should he?), imagine such a waistcoat. Let me show it to him as a sample of my tastes and wishes; and—ha, ha, ha, ha!—eclipse the bridegroom!

I will send a trusty messenger at half-past nine precisely, in the morning. He is sworn to secrecy. He durst not for his life betray us, or swells in ambuscade would have the waistcoat at the cost of his heart's blood.—Thine,

THE UNWAISTCOATED ONE

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Fourth November, 1845.*

MY DEAR SMITH,—My chickens and their little <sup>Mr. H. P. Smith.</sup> aunt will be delighted to do honour to the Lord Mayor on the ninth. So should I be, but I am hard at it, grinding my teeth.

I came down with Thompson the other day, hoping to see you. You were keeping it up, however, in some holiday

<sup>1</sup> Madame De la Rue.

<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Thompson.



region, and your glass-case looked like a large pantry, out of which some giant had stolen the meat.

Best regards to Mrs. Smith from all of us.—Always, my dear Smith,  
Faithfully yours.

*Tenth November, 1845.*

Mr. Macvey  
Napier.

MY DEAR SIR,—I write to you in great haste. I most bitterly regret the being obliged to disappoint and inconvenience you (as I fear I shall do), but I find it will be *impossible* for me to write the paper on Capital Punishment for your next number. The fault is really not mine. I have been involved for the last fortnight in one maze of distractions, which nothing could have enabled me to anticipate or prevent. Everything I have had to do has been interfered with and cast aside. I have never in my life had so many insuperable obstacles crowded into the way of my pursuits. It is as little my fault, believe me, as though I were ill and wrote to you from my bed. And pray bear as gently as you can with the vexation I occasion you, when I tell you how very heavily it falls upon myself.

Faithfully yours.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Twenty-eighth November, 1845.*

Viscount  
Morpeth.

MY DEAR LORD MORPETH,—I have delayed writing to you until now, hoping I might have been able to tell you of our dramatic plans, and of the day on which we purpose playing. But as these matters are still in abeyance, I will give you that precious information when I come into receipt of it myself. And let me heartily assure you, that I had at least as much pleasure in seeing you the other day as you can possibly have had in seeing me; and that I shall consider all opportunities of becoming better known to you among the most fortunate and desirable occasions of my life. And that I am with your conviction about the probability of our liking each other, and, as Lord Lyndhurst might say, with 'something more.'

Ever faithfully yours.

1846

## NARRATIVE

IN the spring of this year Charles Dickens gave up the editorship of the *Daily News*, and finally all connection with that journal, and went again abroad with his family; the house in Devonshire Terrace being let for twelve months. He made his summer residence at Lausanne, taking a villa (Rosemont) there, from May till November. Here he wrote *The Battle of Life*, and the first number of *Dombey and Son*. In November he removed to Paris, where he took a house in the Rue de Courcelles for the winter, and where he lived and was at work upon *Dombey* until March, 1847. Among the English residents that summer at Lausanne he made many friendships, in proof of which he dedicated the Christmas book written there to his 'English friends at Lausanne.' The especially intimate friendship which he formed were with M. De Cerjat, who was always a resident of Lausanne; with Mr. Haldimand, whose name was identified with the place; and with the Hon. Richard and Mrs. Watson, of Rockingham Castle. He maintained a constant correspondence with Mr. and Mrs. Watson, and afterwards dedicated to them his own favourite of all his books, *David Copperfield*. M. De Cerjat, from the time of Charles Dickens' leaving Lausanne, began a custom, which he kept up almost without an interval to the time of his own death, of writing him a long letter every Christmas, to which Charles Dickens returned answers, which will be given in this and the following years.

In this year we have the commencement of his association and correspondence with Mr. W. H. Wills. Their connection began in the short term of his editorship of the *Daily News*, when he at once fully appreciated Mr. Wills' invaluable business qualities. And when, some time later, he started his own periodical, *Household Words*, he thought himself very fortunate in being able to secure Mr. Wills' co-operation as editor of that journal, and afterwards of *All the Year Round*, with which *Household Words* was incorporated.



## 176 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

They worked together on terms of the most perfect mutual understanding, confidence, and affectionate regard, until Mr. Wills' health made it necessary for him to retire from the work in 1868.

Our first letters to the Rev. James White, Mr. Walter Savage Landor, and Miss Marion Ely (the niece of Lady Talfourd), all dear friends of Charles Dickens, are also given in this year.

We give also a note to Mr. W. J. Fox, afterwards M.P. for Oldham, well known for his eloquent advocacy of the Repeal of the Corn Laws, who was engaged to write the political articles in the first numbers of the *Daily News*.

OFFICE OF THE 'DAILY NEWS,' WHITEFRIARS, *Twenty-first January, 1846.*

Mr. W. J. Fox. MY DEAR FOX,—The boy is in waiting. I need not tell you how our Printer failed us last night.<sup>1</sup> I hope for better things to-night, and am bent on a fight for it. If we can get a good paper to-morrow, I believe we are as safe as such a thing can be.

Your leader most excellent. I made bold to take out — for reasons that I hinted at the other day, and which I think have validity in them. He is unscrupulous and indiscreet. Cobden never so.

It didn't offend you?

Ever faithfully.

ROSEMONT, *Tuesday Morning.*

Mr. T. J. Thompson. MY DEAR THOMPSON,—All kinds of hearty and cordial congratulations on the event.<sup>2</sup> We all delight that it is at last well over. There is an uncertainty attendant on angelic strangers (as Miss Tox says) which it is a great relief to have so happily disposed of.

Ever yours.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Eighteenth February, 1846.*

Mr. W. H. Wills. MY DEAR MR. WILLS,—Do look at the enclosed from Mrs. What's-her-name. For a sur-

<sup>1</sup> The first issue of the *Daily News* was a sad failure, as to printing.

<sup>2</sup> The birth, at Lausanne, of Mr. Thompson's eldest daughter—now Mrs. Butler.

prising audacity it is remarkable even to me, who am positively bullied, and all but beaten, by these people. I wish you would do me the favour to write to her (in your own name and from your own address), stating that you answered her letter as you did, because if I were the wealthiest nobleman in England I could not keep pace with one-twentieth part of the demands upon me, and because you saw no internal evidence in her application to induce you to single it out for any especial notice. That the tone of this letter renders you exceedingly glad you did so; and that you decline, from me, holding any correspondence with her. Something to that effect, after what flourish your nature will.

Faithfully yours always.

1 DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, YORK GATE, REGENT'S PARK,  
*Twenty-fourth February, 1846.*

I cannot help telling you, my dear White, for Rev. James White. I can think of no formal use of Mister to such a writer as you, that I have just now read your tragedy, *The Earl of Gowrie*, with delight which I should in vain endeavour to express to you. Considered with reference to its story, or its characters, or its noble poetry, I honestly regard it as a work of most remarkable genius. It has impressed me powerfully and enduringly. I am proud to have received it from your hand. And if I have to tell you what complete possession it has taken of me—that is, if I *could* tell you—I do believe you would be glad to know it.

Always faithfully yours.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Second March, 1846.*

Many thanks for the letters! I will take the Countess of Blessington. greatest care of them, though I blush to find how little they deserve it.

It vexes me very much that I am going out on Friday, and cannot help it. I have no strength of mind, I am afraid. I am always making engagements in which there is no prospect of satisfaction.

Vague thoughts of a new book are rife within me just now; and I go wandering about at night into the strangest



places, according to my usual propensity at such a time, seeking rest, and finding none. As an addition to my composure, I ran over a little dog in the Regent's Park yesterday (killing him on the spot), and gave his little mistress, a girl of thirteen or fourteen, such exquisite distress as I never saw the like of.

I must have some talk with you about those American singers.<sup>1</sup> They must never go back to their own country without your having heard them sing Hood's 'Bridge of Sighs.' My God, how sorrowful and pitiful it is!

Best regards to Count D'Orsay and the young ladies.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Fourth March*, 1846.

Mr. W. H. Wills. MY DEAR MR. WILLS,—I assure you I am very truly and unaffectedly sensible of your earnest friendliness, and in proof of my feeling its worth I shall unhesitatingly trouble you sometimes, in the fullest reliance on your meaning what you say. The letter from Nelson Square is a very manly and touching one. But I am more helpless in such a case as that than in any other, having really fewer means of helping such a gentleman to employment than I have of firing off the guns in the Tower. Such appeals come to me here in scores upon scores.

The letter from Little White Lion Street does not impress me favourably. It is not written in a simple or truthful manner, I am afraid, and is *not* a good reference. Moreover, I think it probable that the writer may have deserted some pursuit for which he is qualified, for vague and laborious strivings which he has no pretensions to make. However, I will certainly act on your impression of him, whatever it may be. And if you could explain to the gentleman in Nelson Square, that I am not evading his request, but that I do not know of anything to which I can recommend him, it would be a great relief to me.

Tell Powell (with my regards) that he needn't 'deal with'

<sup>1</sup> The 'Hutchinson Family,' consisting of four brothers and a sister, who came to London to give a musical entertainment shortly after Charles Dickens' return from his first visit to America. He had a great interest in, and liking for, these young people.

the American notices of the *Cricket*. I never read one word of their abuse, and I should think it base to read their praises. It is something to know that one is righted so soon; and knowing that, I can afford to know no more.

Ever faithfully yours.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Sixth March*, 1846.

MY DEAR STANNY,—In reference to the damage of the candlesticks, I beg to quote (from *The Cricket on the Hearth*, by the highly popular and deservedly so Dick) this reply:

Mr.  
Clarkson  
Stanfield,  
R.A.

‘I’ll damage you if you enquire.’

Ever yours,

My block-reeving,  
Main-brace splicing,  
Lead-heaving,  
Ship-conning,  
Stun’sail-bending,  
Deck-Swabbing  
Son of a sea-cook,

HENRY BLUFF,

H.M.S. *Timber*.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Saturday, Thirteenth April*, 1846.

MY DEAR SIR,—Do you recollect sending me your biography of Shakespeare last autumn, and my not acknowledging its receipt? I do, with remorse.

Mr. Charles  
Knight.

The truth is, that I took it out of town with me, read it with great pleasure as a charming piece of honest enthusiasm and perseverance, kept it by me, came home, meant to say all manner of things to you, suffered the time to go by, got ashamed, thought of speaking to you, never saw you, felt it heavy on my mind, and now fling off the load by thanking you heartily, and hoping you will not think it too late.—Always believe me,

Faithfully yours.



DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Sunday, Nineteenth April, 1846.*

Miss Ely. MY DEAR MISS ELY,—A mysterious emissary brought me a note in your always welcome handwriting at the Athenæum last night. I enquired of the servant in attendance whether the bearer of this letter was of my vast establishment. To which he replied, 'Yezzir.' 'Then,' said I, 'tell him not to wait.'

Maclise was with me. It was then half-past seven. We had been walking, and were splashed to the eyes. We debated upon the possibility of getting to Russell Square in reasonable time—decided that it would be in the worst taste to appear when the performance would be half over—and very reluctantly decided not to come. You may suppose how dirty and dismal we were when we went to the Thames Tunnel, of all places in the world, instead!

When I came home here at midnight I found another letter from you (I left off in this place to press it dutifully to my lips). Then my mind misgave me that *you* must have sent to the Athenæum. At the apparent rudeness of my reply, my face, as Hadji Baba says, was turned upside down, and fifty donkeys sat upon my father's grave—or would have done so, but for his not being dead yet.

Therefore I send this humble explanation—protesting, however, which I do most solemnly, against being invited under such untoward circumstances; and claiming as your old friend and no less old admirer to be instantly invited to the next performance, if such a thing is ever contemplated.—  
Ever, my dear Miss Ely, Faithfully yours.

GENEVA, *Saturday, Twenty-fourth October, 1846.*

Mr. W. C. Macready. MY DEAR MACREADY,—The welcome sight of your handwriting moves me (though I have nothing to say) to show you mine, and if I could recollect the passage in *Virginius* I would paraphrase it, and say, 'Does it seem to tremble, boy? Is it a loving autograph? Does it beam with friendship and affection?' all of which I say, as I write, with—oh Heaven!—such a splendid imitation of you, and finally give you one of those grasps and shakes

with which I have seen you make the young Icilius stagger again.

Here I am, running away from a bad headache as Tristram Shandy ran away from death, and lodging for a week in the Hôtel de l'Écu de Genève, wherein there is a large mirror shattered by a cannon-ball in the late revolution. A revolution, whatever its merits, achieved by free spirits, nobly generous and moderate, even in the first transports of victory, elevated by a splendid popular education, and bent on freedom from all tyrants, whether their crowns be shaven or golden. The newspapers may tell you what they please. I believe there is no country on earth but Switzerland in which a violent change could have been effected in the Christian spirit shown in this place, or in the same proud, independent gallant style. Not one halfpennyworth of property was lost, stolen, or strayed. Not one atom of party malice survived the smoke of the last gun. Nothing is expressed in the government addresses to the citizens but a regard for the general happiness, and injunctions to forget all animosities; which they are practically obeying at every turn, though the late Government (of whose spirit I had some previous knowledge) did load the guns with such material as should occasion gangrene in the wounds, and though the wounded do *die*, consequently every day, in the hospital, of sores that in themselves were nothing.

*You* a mountaineer! *You* examine (I have seen you do it) the point of your young son's bâton de montagne before he went up into the snow! And *you* talk of coming to Lausanne in March! Why, Lord love your heart, William Tell, times are changed since you lived at Altorf. There is not a mountain pass open until June. The snow is closing in on all the panorama already. I was at the Great St. Bernard two months ago, and it was bitter cold and frosty then. Do you think I could let you hazard your life by going up any pass worth seeing in bleak March? Never shall it be said that Dickens sacrificed his friend upon the altar of his hospitality! Onward! To Paris! (Cue for band. Dickens points off with truncheon, first entrance P.S. Page delivers gauntlets on one knee. Dickens puts 'em on



and gradually falls into a fit of musing. Mrs. Dickens lays her hand upon his shoulder. Business. Procession. Curtain.)

It is a great pleasure to me, my dear Macready, to hear from yourself, as I had previously heard from Forster, that you are so well pleased with *Dombey* which is evidently a great success and a great hit, thank God! I felt that Mrs. Brown was strong, but I was not at all afraid of giving as heavy a blow as I could to a piece of hot iron that lay ready at my hand. For that is my principle always, and I hope to come down with some heavier sledge-hammers than that.

Your most affectionate Friend.

PARIS, November, 1846.

Mr. Hal-      Talking of which <sup>1</sup> reminds me to say, that I  
mand.      have written to my printers, and told them to  
prefix to *The Battle of Life* a dedication that is printed in  
illuminated capitals on my heart. It is only this:

‘This Christmas book is cordially inscribed to my English friends in Switzerland.’

I shall trouble you with a little parcel of three or four copies to distribute to those whose names will be found written in them, as soon as they can be made ready, and believe me, that there is no success or approval in the great world beyond the Jura that will be more precious and delightful to me, than the hope that I shall be remembered of an evening in the coming winter time, at one or two friends’ I could mention near the Lake of Geneva. It runs with a spring tide, that will always flow and never ebb, through my memory; and nothing less than the waters of Lethe shall confuse the music of its running, until it loses itself in that great sea, for which all the currents of our life are desperately bent.

<sup>1</sup> *The Battle of Life.*

## TO WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR 183

PARIS, *Sunday, Twenty-second November, 1846.*

YOUNG MAN,—I will not go there if I can help it. I have not the least confidence in the value of your introduction to the Devil. I can't help thinking that it would be of better use 'the other way, the other way,' but I won't try it there, either, at present, if I can help it. Your godson says is that your duty? and he begs me to enclose a blush newly blushed for you.

Mr. Walter  
Savage  
Landor.

As to writing, I have written to you twenty times and twenty more to that, if you only knew it. I have been writing a little Christmas book, besides, expressly for you. And if you don't like it, I shall go to the font of Marylebone Church as soon as I conveniently can and renounce you: I am not to be trifled with. I write from Paris. I am getting up some French steam. I intend to proceed upon the longing-for-a-lap-of-blood-at-last principle, and if you *do* offend me, look to it.

We are all well and happy, and they send loves to you by the bushel. We are in the agonies of house-hunting. The people are frightfully civil, and grotesquely extortionate. One man (with a house to let) told me yesterday that he loved the Duke of Wellington like a brother. The same gentleman wanted to hug me round the neck with one hand, and pick my pocket with the other.

Don't be hard upon the Swiss. They are a thorn in the sides of European despots, and a good wholesome people to live near Jesuit-ridden kings on the brighter side of the mountains. My hat shall ever be ready to be thrown up, and my glove ever be ready to be thrown down for Switzerland. If you were the man I took you for, when I took you (as a godfather) for better and for worse, you would come to Paris and amaze the weak walls of the house I haven't found yet with that steady snore of yours, which I once heard piercing the door of your bedroom in Devonshire Terrace, reverberating along the bell-wire in the hall, so getting outside into the street, playing Eolian harps among the area railings, and going down the New Road like the blast of a trumpet.

I forgive you your reviling of me: there's a shovelful of



## 184 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

live coals for your head—does it burn? And am, with true affection—does it burn now?—  
Ever yours

PARIS, 48 RUE DE COURCELLES, ST. HONORÉ,  
*Friday, Twenty-seventh November, 1846.*

Hon.  
Richard  
Watson.

MY DEAR WATSON,—We were housed only yesterday. I lose no time in despatching this memorandum of our whereabouts, in order that you may not fail to write me a line before you come to Paris on your way towards England, letting me know on what day we are to expect you to dinner.

We arrived here quite happily and well. I don't mean here, but at the Hôtel Brighton, in Paris, on Friday evening between six and seven o'clock. The agonies of house-hunting were frightfully severe. It was one paroxysm for four mortal days. I am proud to express my belief, that we are lodged at last in the most preposterous house in the world. The like of it cannot and so far as my knowledge goes does not, exist in any part of the globe. The bedrooms are like opera-boxes. The dining-rooms, staircases, and passages, quite inexplicable. The dining-room is a sort of cavern, painted (ceiling and all) to represent a grove, with unaccountable bits of looking-glass sticking in among the branches of the trees. There is a gleam of reason in the drawing-room. But it is approached through a series of small chambers, like the joints in a telescope, which are hung with inscrutable drapery. The maddest man in Bedlam, having the materials given him, would be likely to devise such a suite, supposing his case to be hopeless and quite incurable.

Pray tell Mrs. Watson, with my best regards, that the dance of the two sisters in the little Christmas book is being done as an illustration by Maclise; and that Stanfield is doing the battleground and the outside of the Nutmeg Grater Inn. Maclise is also drawing some smaller subjects for the little story, and they write me that they hope it will be very pretty, and they think that I shall like it. I shall have been in London before I see you, probably, and I hope the book will then be on its road to Lausanne to speak for itself,

and to speak a word for me too. I have never left so many friendly and cheerful recollections in any place; and to represent me in my absence, its tone should be very eloquent and affectionate indeed.

Well, if I don't turn up again next summer it shall not be my fault. In the meanwhile, I shall often and often look that way with my mind's eye, and hear the sweet, clear, bell-like voice of —— with the ear of my imagination. In the event of there being any change—but it is not likely—in the appearance of ——'s cravat behind, where it goes up into his head, I mean, and frets against his wig—I hope some one of my English friends will apprise me of it, for the love of the great Saint Bernard.

I have not seen Lord Normanby yet. I have not seen anything up to this time but houses and lodgings. I saw the king the other day coming into Paris. His carriage was surrounded by guards on horseback, and he sat very far back in it, I thought, and drove at a great pace. It was strange to see the préfet of police on horseback some hundreds of yards in advance, looking to the right and left as he rode, like a man who suspected every twig in every tree in the long avenue.

Mrs. Dickens and her sister desire their best regards to be sent to you and their best loves to Mrs. Watson, in which I join, as nearly as I may.—Believe me, with great truth,

Very sincerely yours.

PARIS, RUE DE COURCELLES, ST. HONORÉ,  
*Friday, Twenty-seventh November, 1846.*

MY DEAR CERJAT,—When we turned out of M. De  
Cerjat. your view on that disconsolate Monday, when you so kindly took horse and rode forth to say good-bye, we went on in a very dull and drowsy manner, I can assure you. I could have borne a world of punch in the rumble, and been none the worse for it. There was an uncommonly cool inn that night, and quite a monstrous establishment at Auxonne the next night, full of flatulent passages and banging doors. The next night we passed at Montbard, where there is one of the very best little inns in all France. The next at Sens,



and so we got here. The roads were bad, but not very for French roads. There was no deficiency of horses anywhere; and after Pontarlier the weather was really not too cold for comfort. They weighed our plate at the frontier custom-house, spoon by spoon, and fork by fork, and we lingered about there, in a thick fog and a hard frost, for three long hours and a half, during which the officials committed all manner of absurdities, and got into all sorts of disputes with my brave courier. This was the only misery we encountered—except leaving Lausanne, and that was enough to last us and *did* last us all the way here. We are living on it now. I felt, myself, much as I should think the murderer felt on that fair morning when, with his gray-haired victim (those unconscious gray hairs, soon to be bedabbled with blood), he went so far towards heaven as the top of that mountain of St. Bernard without one touch of remorse. A weight is on my breast. The only difference between me and the murderer is, that his weight was guilt and mine is regret.

I haven't a word of news to tell you. I shouldn't write at all if I were not the vainest man in the world, impelled by a belief that you will be glad to hear from me, even though you hear no more than that I have nothing to say. *Dombey* is doing wonders. Keeley and his wife are making great preparations for producing the Christmas story, and I have made them (as an old stage-manager) carry out one or two expensive notions of mine about scenery and so forth—in particular a sudden change from the inside of the doctor's house in the midst of the ball to the orchard in the snow—which ought to tell very well. But actors are so bad, in general, and the best are spread over so many theatres, that the 'cast' is black despair and moody madness. There is no one to be got for Marion but a certain Miss —— I am afraid—a pupil of Miss Kelly's, who acted in the private theatricals I got up a year ago. Macready took her afterwards to play Virginia to his Virginius, but she made nothing of it, great as the chance was. I have promised to show her what I mean, as near as I can, and if you will look into the English Opera

House on the morning of the seventeenth, eighteenth, or nineteenth of next month, between the hours of eleven and four, you will find me in a very hot and dusty condition, playing all the parts of the piece, to the immense diversion of all the actors, actresses, scene-shifters, carpenters, musicians, chorus people, tailors, dressmakers, scene-painters, and general ragamuffins of the theatre.

Moore, the poet, is very ill—I fear dying. The last time I saw him was immediately before I left London, and I thought him sadly changed and tamed, but not much more so than such a man might be under the heavy hand of time. I believe he suffered severe grief in the death of a son some time ago. The first man I met in Paris was ——, who took hold of me as I was getting into a coach at the door of the hotel. He hadn't a button on his shirt (but I don't think he ever has), and you might have sown what boys call 'mustard and cress' in the dust on his coat. There seems reason to fear that the growing dissensions between England and France, and the irritation of the French king, may lead to the withdrawal of the minister on each side of the Channel.

Have you cut down any more trees, played any more rubbers, propounded any more teasers to the players at the game of Yes and No? How is the old horse? How is the gray mare? How is Crab (to whom my respectful compliments)? Have you tried the punch yet; if yes, did it succeed; if no, why not? Is Mrs. Cerjat as happy and as well as I would have her, and all your house ditto ditto? Does Haldimand play whist with any science yet? Ha, ha, ha! the idea of his saying *I* hadn't any! And are those damask-cheeked virgins, the Miss ——, still sleeping on dewy rose leaves near the English church?

Remember me to all your house, and most of all to its other head, with all the regard and earnestness that a 'numble individual' (as they always call it in the House of Commons) who once travelled with her in a car over a smooth country may charge you with. I have added two lines to the little Christmas book, that I hope both you and she may not dislike. Haldimand will tell you what they are. Kate and



## 188    LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

Georgy send their kindest loves.    Believe me always, my dear Cerjat, full of cordial and hearty recollections of this past summer and autumn, and your part in my part of them,  
Very faithfully your Friend.

48 RUE DE COURCELLES, ST. HONORÉ, PARIS,  
*Second December, 1846.*

Mr. T. J.  
Thompson.

MY DEAR THOMPSON,—We got to Paris, in due course, on the Friday evening. We had a pleasant and prosperous journey, having rather cold weather in Switzerland and on the borders thereof, and a slight detention of three hours and a half at the frontier Custom House, atop of a mountain, in a hard frost and a dense fog. We came into this house last Thursday. It has a pretty drawing-room, approached through four most extraordinary chambers. It is the most ridiculous and preposterous house in the world, I should think. It belongs to a Marquis Castellane, but was fitted (so Paul Pry Poole said, who dined here yesterday) by — in a fit of temporary insanity, I have no doubt. The dining-room is mere midsummer madness, and is designed to represent a bosky grove.

At this present writing, snow is falling in the street, and the weather is very cold, but not so cold as it was yesterday. I dined with Lord Normanby on Sunday last. Everything seems to be queer and uncomfortable in the diplomatic way, and he is rather bothered and worried to my thinking. I found young Sheridan (Mrs. Norton's brother) the attaché. I know him very well, and he is a good man for my sight-seeing purposes. There are to be no theatricals unless the times should so adjust themselves as to admit of their being French, to which the Markis seems to incline, as a bit of conciliation and a popular move.

Lumley, of Italian opera notoriety, also dined here yesterday, and seems hugely afraid of the opposition opera at Covent Garden, who have already spirited away Grisi and Mario, which he affects to consider a great comfort and relief. I gave him some uncompromising information on the subject of his pit, and told him that if he didn't conciliate the middle classes, he might depend on being damaged, very

decidedly. The danger of the Covent Garden enterprise seems to me to be that they are going in for ballet too, and I really don't think the house is large enough to repay the double expense.

Forster writes me that Mac has come out with tremendous vigour in the Christmas Book, and took off his coat at it with a burst of such alarming energy that he has done four subjects! Stanfield has done three. Keeleys are making that 'change'<sup>1</sup> I was so hot upon at Lausanne, and seem ready to spend money with bold hearts. Mr. Leigh Murray, from the Princess's, is to be the Alfred, and Forster says there is a Mrs. Gordon at Bolton's who must be got for Grace. I am horribly afraid — will do one of the lawyers, and there seems to be nobody but — for Marion. I shall run over and carry consternation into the establishment, as soon as I have done the number. But I have not begun it yet, though I hope to do so to-night, having been quite put out by chopping and changing about, and by a vile touch of biliousness, that makes my eyes feel as if they were yellow bullets. *Dombey* has passed its thirty thousand already. Do you remember a mysterious man in a straw hat low-crowned, and a Petersham coat, who was a sort of manager or amateur manservant at Miss Kelly's? Mr. Baynton Bolt, sir, came out, the other night, as Macbeth, at the Royal Surrey Theatre.

There's all my news for you! Let me know, in return, whether you have fought a duel yet with your milingtary landlord, and whether Lausanne is still that giddy world of dissipation it was wont to be, also full particulars of your fairer and better half, and of the baby. I will send a Christmas book to Clermont as soon as I get any copies. And so no more at present from

Yours ever.

58 LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS, Saturday, Nineteenth December, 1846.

MY DEAREST KATE,—I really am bothered to death by this confounded *dramatisation* of the Christmas book. They were in a state so horrible at Keeley's yesterday (as perhaps Forster told you when he wrote), that I was obliged to engage to read the book to

Mrs.  
Charles  
Dickens.

<sup>1</sup> In the dramatised *Battle of Life*.



them this morning. It struck me that Mr. Leigh Murray, Miss Daly, and Vining seemed to understand it best. Certainly Miss Daly knew best what she was about yesterday. At eight to-night we have a rehearsal with scenery and band, and everything but dresses. I see no possibility of escaping from it before one or two o'clock in the morning. And I was at the theatre all day yesterday. Unless I had come to London, I do not think there would have been much hope of the version being more than just tolerated, even that doubtful. All the actors bad, all the business frightfully behind-hand. The very words of the book confused in the copying into the densest and most insufferable nonsense. I must exempt, however, from the general slackness both the Keeleys. I hope they will be very good. I have never seen anything of its kind better than the manner in which they played the little supper scene between Clemency and Britain, yesterday. It was quite perfect, even to me.

The small manager, Forster, Talfourd, Stanny, and Macdine with me at the Piazza to-day, before the rehearsal. I have already one or two uncommonly good stories of Mac. I reserve them for narration. I have also a dreadful cold, which I would not reserve if I could help it. I can hardly hold up my head, and fight through from hour to hour, but had serious thoughts just now of walking off to bed.

Christmas book published to-day—twenty-three thousand copies already gone!!!—Believe me, my love,

Most affectionately.

PIAZZA COFFEE-HOUSE, COVENT GARDEN,  
*Monday, Twenty-first December, 1846.*

Mrs.  
Charles  
Dickens.

MY DEAREST KATE,—In a quiet interval of half an hour before going to dine at Macready's, I sit down to write you a few words. But I shall reserve my letter for to-morrow's post, in order that you may hear what *I* hear of the 'going' of the play to-night. Think of my being there on Saturday, with a really frightful cold, and working harder than ever I did at the amateur plays, until two in the morning. There was no supper to be got, either here or anywhere else, after coming out; and I was as hungry

and thirsty as need be. The scenery and dresses are very good indeed, and they have spent money on it *liberally*. The great change from the ball-room to the snowy night is most effective, and both the departure and the return will tell, I think, strongly on an audience. I have made them very quick and excited in the passionate scenes, and so have infused some appearance of life into these parts of the play. But I can't make a Marion, and Miss —— is awfully bad. She is a mere nothing all through. I put Mr. Leigh Murray into such a state, by making him tear about, that the perspiration ran streaming down his face. They have a great lot. I believe every place in the house is taken. Roche is going.

*Tuesday Morning.*—The play went, as well as I can make out—I hoped to have had Stanny's report of it, but he is ill—with great effect. There was immense enthusiasm at its close, and great uproar and shouting for me. Forster will go on Wednesday, and write you his account of it. I saw the Keeleys on the stage at eleven o'clock or so, and they were in prodigious spirits and delight.

48 RUE DE COURCELLES, PARIS,  
*Sunday Night, Twenty-seventh December, 1846.*

MY VERY DEAR FORSTER,—Amen, amen. Many merry Christmases, many happy new years, un-  
broken friendship, great accumulation of cheerful recollections, affection on earth, and heaven at last for all of us.

Mr. John  
Forster.

I enclose you a letter from Jeffrey, which you may like to read. *Bring it to me back when you come over.* I have told him all he wants to know. Is it not a strange example of the hazards of writing in numbers that a man like him should form his notion of Dombey and Miss Tox on three months' knowledge? I have asked him the same question, and advised him to keep his eye on both of them as time rolls on.

We had a cold journey here from Boulogne, but the roads were not very bad. The malle poste, however, now takes the trains at Amiens. We missed it by ten minutes, and had to wait three hours—from twelve o'clock until three, in which interval I drank brandy and water, and slept like a top. It is delightful travelling for its speed, that malle poste, and really



for its comfort too. But on this occasion it was not remarkable for the last-named quality. The director of the post at Boulogne told me a lamentable story of his son at Paris being ill, and implored me to bring him on. The brave doubted the representations altogether, but I couldn't find it in my heart to say no; so we brought the director, bodkinwise, and being a large man, in a great number of great-coats, he crushed us dismally until we got to the railroad. For two passengers (and it never carries more) it is capital. For three, excruciating.

Write to Poole what you have said to me. You need write no more. He is full of vicious fancies and wrong suspicions even of Hardwick, and I would rather he heard it from you than from me, whom he is not likely to love much in his heart. I doubt it may be but a rusty instrument for want of use, the Pooleish heart.

My most important present news is that I am going to take a jorum of hot rum and egg in bed immediately, and to cover myself up with all the blankets in the house. I have a sensation in my head, as if it were 'on edge.' It is still very cold here, but the snow had disappeared on my return, both here and on the road, except within ten miles or so of Boulogne.

Ever affectionately.

1847

#### NARRATIVE

AT the beginning of the year Charles Dickens was still living in Paris—Rue de Courcelles. His stay there was cut shorter than he intended it to have been, by the illness from scarlet fever of his eldest son, who was at school in London. Consequent upon this, Charles Dickens and his wife went to London at the end of February, taking up their abode at the Victoria Hotel, Euston Square, the Devonshire Terrace house being still occupied by its tenant, Sir James Duke. The sick boy was under the care of his grandmother, Mrs. Hogarth, in Albany Street. The children, with their aunt, remained in Paris, until a temporary house had been taken for the family

in Chester Place, Regent's Park; and Roche was then sent back to take *all* home. In Chester Place another son was born—Sydney Smith Haldimand—his godfathers being Mr. Haldimand, of Lausanne, and Mr. H. P. Smith, of the Eagle Life Assurance office. He was christened at the same time as a daughter of Mr. Macready's, and the letters to Mr. Smith have reference to the postponement of the christening on Mr. Smith's account. In May, Charles Dickens had lodgings in Brighton for some weeks, for the recovery of Mrs. Dickens' health; going there first with his wife and sister-in-law and the eldest boy—now recovered from his fever—and being joined at the latter part of the time by his two little daughters, to whom there are some letters among those which follow here. He removed earlier than usual this summer to Broadstairs, which remained his headquarters until October, with intervals of absence for amateur theatrical tours (which Mr. Forster calls 'splendid strolling'), in which he was usually accompanied by his wife and sister-in-law. Several new recruits had been added to the theatrical company, from among distinguished literary men and artists, and it now included, besides those previously named, Mr. George Cruikshank, Mr. George Henry Lewes, and Mr. Augustus Egg; Charles Dickens being always the supreme manager of the company. *Every Man in his Humour* and farces were again played at Manchester and Liverpool, for the benefit of Mr. Leigh Hunt, and the dramatic author, Mr. John Poole.

By the end of the Broadstairs holiday, the house in Devonshire Terrace was vacant, and the family returned to it in October. All this year Charles Dickens had been at work upon the monthly numbers of *Dombey and Son*, in spite of these many interruptions. He began at Broadstairs a Christmas book. But he found that the engrossing interest of his novel as it approached completion made it impossible for him to finish the other work in time. So he decided to let this Christmas pass without a story, and postponed the publication of *The Haunted Man* until the following year.

At the close of the year he went to Leeds, to take the chair at a meeting of the Mechanics' Institute, and on the Twenty-eighth December he presided at the opening of the Glasgow



Athenæum; he and his wife being the guests of the historian—*then* Mr. Sheriff, afterwards Sir Archibald, Alison. From a letter to his sister-in-law, written from Edinburgh, it will be seen that Mrs. Dickens was prevented by sudden illness from being present at the ‘demonstration.’ At the end of this letter there is another illustration of the odd names he was in the habit of giving to his children, the last of the three, the ‘Hoshen Peck,’ being a corruption of ‘Ocean Spectre’—a name which had, afterwards, a sad significance, as the boy (Sydney Smith) became a sailor, and died and was buried at sea two years after his father’s death.

The letters in this year need very little explanation. In the first letter to Mrs. Watson, Charles Dickens alludes to a sketch which she had made from *The Battle of Life*, and had sent to him, as a remembrance, when her husband paid a short visit to Paris in this winter.

The letter to Mr. Sheridan Knowles was written after some slight misunderstanding, the cause of which is unknown to us.

The Dr. Hodgson, to whom we give a letter, was then Principal of the Liverpool Institute, and Principal of the Charlton High School, Manchester.

Mr. Alexander Ireland was manager and one of the proprietors of the *Manchester Examiner*. The ‘notice’ mentioned in the third letter to Mr. Ireland refers to an essay on ‘The Genius and Writings of Leigh Hunt,’ contributed to the *Manchester Examiner*; and ‘The Working Man’s Life,’ alluded to in this same letter, was the *Autobiography of a Working Man*, by ‘One who has Whistled at the Plough’ (Alex. Somerville), and originally appeared in the *Manchester Examiner*, and afterwards was published as a volume in 1848.

In this year we give the only letter we have been able to procure to the famous Danish writer, Hans Christian Andersen.

And there are two letters to Miss Marguerite Power, the niece of the Countess of Blessington—a lady for whom Charles Dickens had then, and until her death, a most affectionate friendship and respect, for the sake of her own admirable qualities, and in remembrance of her delightful association with Gore House, where he was a frequent visitor.

For Lady Blessington he had a high admiration and great regard, and she was one of his earliest appreciators; and Alfred, Comte D'Orsay, was also a much-loved friend. His 'own marchioness,' alluded to in the second letter to Miss Power, was the younger and very charming sister of his correspondent.

We much regret having been unable to procure any letters of this period addressed to Mr. Egg. His intimacy with Charles Dickens began first in the plays of this year; but Mr. Egg became, almost immediately, one of the friends for whom he had an especial affection, and was a regular visitor at his house and at his seaside places of resort for many years after this date.

The letter to Mr. William Sandys has reference to an intention which Charles Dickens *had* entertained, of laying the scene of a story in Cornwall; Mr. Sandys, himself a Cornishman, having proposed to send him some books to help him as to the dialect.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Twelfth January*, 1847.

MY DEAR SIR EDWARD,—The Committee of the General Theatrical Fund (who are all actors) are anxious to prefer a petition to you to preside at their next annual dinner at the London Tavern, and having no personal knowledge of you, have requested me as one of their Trustees, through their Secretary, Mr. Cullenford, to give them some kind of presentation to you.

Sir Edward  
Bulwer  
Lytton.

I will only say that I have felt great interest in their design, which embraces all sorts and conditions of actors from the first, and it has been maintained by themselves with extraordinary perseverance and determination. It has been in existence some years, but it is only two years since they began to dine. At their first festival I presided, at their second, Macready. They very naturally hold that if they could prevail on you to reign over them now they would secure a most powerful and excellent advocate, whose aid would serve and grace their cause immensely. I sympathise with their feeling so cordially, and know so well that it would certainly be mine if I were in their case (as, indeed, it is, being their friend),



that I comply with their request for an introduction. And I will not ask you to excuse my troubling you, feeling sure that I may use this liberty with you.—Believe me always,

Very faithfully yours.

48 RUE DE COURCELLES, PARIS,  
Twenty-fourth January, 1847.

Countess of  
Blessington.

MY DEAR LADY BLESSINGTON,—I feel very wicked in beginning this note, and deeply remorseful for not having begun and ended it long ago. But *you* know how difficult it is to write letters in the midst of a writing life; and as you know too (I hope) how earnestly and affectionately I always think of you, wherever I am, I take heart, on a little consideration, and feel comparatively good again.

Forster has been cramming into the space of a fortnight every description of impossible and inconsistent occupation in the way of sight-seeing. He has been now at Versailles, now in the prisons, now at the opera, now at the hospitals, now at the Conservatoire, and now at the Morgue, with a dreadful insatiability. I begin to doubt whether I had anything to do with a book called *Dombey*, or ever sat over number five (not finished a fortnight yet) day after day, until I half began, like the monk in poor Wilkie's story, to think it the only reality in life, and to mistake all the realities for short-lived shadows.

Among the multitude of sights, we saw our pleasant little bud of a friend, Rose Chéri, play Clarissa Harlowe the other night. I believe she does it in London just now, and perhaps you may have seen it. A most charming, intelligent, modest, affecting piece of acting it is, with a death superior to anything I ever saw on the stage, except Macready's Lear. The theatres are admirable just now. We saw *Gentil Bernard* at the Variétés last night acted in a manner that was absolutely perfect. It was a little picture of Watteau, animated and talking from beginning to end. At the Cirque there is a new show-piece called *The French Revolution*, in which there is a representation of the National Convention, and a series of battles (fought by some five hundred people, who look like five thousand) that are wonderful in their extraordinary

vigour and truth. Gun-cotton gives its name to the general annual jocose review at the Palais Royal, which is dull enough, saving for the introduction of Alexandre Dumas, sitting in his study beside a pile of quarto volumes about five feet high, which he says is the first tableau of the first act of the first piece to be played on the first night of his new theatre. The revival of Molière's *Don Juan*, at the Français, has drawn money. It is excellently played, and it is curious to observe how different *their* Don Juan and valet are from our English ideas of master and man. They are playing *Lucretia Borgia* again at the Porte St. Martin, but it is poorly performed and hangs fire drearily, though a very remarkable and striking play. We were at Victor Hugo's house last Sunday week, a most extraordinary place, looking like an old curiosity shop, or the property-room of some gloomy, vast, old theatre. I was much struck by Hugo himself, who looks like a genius as he is, every inch of him, and is very interesting and satisfactory from head to foot. His wife is a handsome woman, with flashing black eyes. There is also a charming ditto daughter of fifteen or sixteen, with ditto eyes. Sitting among old armour and old tapestry, and old coffers, and grim old chairs and tables, and old canopies of state from old palaces, and old golden lions going to play at skittles with ponderous old golden balls, they made a most romantic show, and looked like a chapter out of one of his own books.

. . . . .

PARIS, 48 RUE DE COURCELLES, *Twenty-fifth January, 1847.*

MY DEAR MRS. WATSON,—I cannot allow your wandering lord to return to your—I suppose The Hon. Mrs. Watson. 'arms' is not improper—arms, then, without thanking you in half a dozen words for your letter, and assuring you that I had great interest and pleasure in its receipt, and that I say Amen to all *you* say of our happy past and hopeful future. There is a picture of Lausanne—St. Bernard—the tavern by the little lake between Lausanne and Vevay, which is kept by that drunken dog whom Haldimand believes to be so sober—and of many other such scenes, within doors



and without—that rises up to my mind very often, and in the quiet pleasure of its aspect rather daunts me, as compared with the reality of a stirring life; but, please God, we will have some more pleasant days, and go up some more mountains, somewhere, and laugh together, at somebody, and form the same delightful little circle again, somehow.

I quite agree with you about the illustrations to the little Christmas book. I was delighted with yours. Your good lord before-mentioned will inform you that it hangs up over my chair in the drawing-room here; and when you come to England (after I have seen you again in Lausanne) I will show it you in my little study at home, quietly thanking you on the bookcase. Then we will go and see some of Turner's recent pictures, and decide that question to Haldimand's utmost confusion.

You will find Watson looking wonderfully well, I think. When he was first here, on his way to England, he took an extraordinary bath, in which he was rubbed all over with chemical compounds, and had everything done to him that could be invented for seven francs. It *may* be the influence of this treatment that I see in his face, but I think it's the prospect of coming back to Elysée. All I can say is, that when *I* come that way, and find myself among those friends again, I expect to be perfectly lovely—a kind of Glorious Apollo, radiant and shining with joy.

. . . . .

PARIS, 48 RUE DE COURCELLES, HONORÉ,  
*Thursday, Twenty-eighth January, 1847.*

Rev.  
 Edward  
 Tagart.

MY DEAR SIR,—Before you read any more, I wish you would take those tablets out of your drawer, in which you have put a black mark against my name, and erase it neatly. I don't deserve it, on my word I don't, though appearances are against me, I willingly confess.

I had gone to Geneva, to recover from an uncommon depression of spirits, consequent on too much sitting over *Dombey* and the little Christmas book, when I received your letter as I was going out walking, one sunshiny, windy day. I

read it on the banks of the Rhone, where it runs, very blue and swift, between two high green hills, with ranges of snowy mountains filling up the distance. Its cordial and unaffected tone gave me the greatest pleasure—did me a world of good—set me up for the afternoon, and gave me an evening's subject of discourse. For I talked to 'them' (that is Kate and Georgy) about those bright mornings at the Peschiere, until bedtime, and threatened to write you such a letter next day as would—I don't exactly know what it was to do, but it was to be a great letter, expressive of all kinds of pleasant things, and perhaps the most genial letter that ever was written.

From that hour to this, I have again and again and again said, 'I'll write to-morrow,' and here I am to-day full of penitence—really sorry and ashamed, and with no excuse but my writing-life, which makes me get up and go out, when my morning work is done, and look at pen and ink no more until I begin again.

Besides which, I have been seeing Paris—wandering into hospitals, prisons, dead-houses, operas, theatres, concert-rooms, burial-grounds, palaces, and wine-shops. In my unoccupied fortnight of each month, every description of gaudy and ghastly sight has been passing before me in a rapid panorama. Before that, I had come here from Switzerland, over frosty mountains in dense fogs, and through towns with walls and drawbridges, and without population, or anything else in particular but soldiers and mud. I took a flight to London for four days, and went and came back over one sheet of snow, sea excepted; and I wish that had been snow too. Then Forster (who is here now, and begs me to send his kindest regards) came to see Paris for himself, and in showing it to him, away I was borne again, like an enchanted rider. In short, I have had no rest in my play; and on Monday I am going to work again. A fortnight hence the play will begin once more; a fortnight after that the work will follow round, and so the letters that I care for go unwritten.

Do you care for French news? I hope not, because I don't know any. There is a melodrama, called *The French Revolution*, now playing at the Cirque, in the first act of which



there is the most tremendous representation of a *people* that can well be imagined. There are wonderful battles and so forth in the piece, but there is a power and massiveness in the mob which is positively awful. At another theatre *Clarissa Harlowe* is still the rage. There are some things in it rather calculated to astonish the ghost of Richardson, but *Clarissa* is very admirably played, and dies better than the original to my thinking; but Richardson is no great favourite of mine, and never seems to me to take his top-boots off, whatever he does. Several pieces are in course of representation, involving rare portraits of the English. In one, a servant, called 'Tom Bob,' who wears a particularly English waistcoat trimmed with gold lace and concealing his ankles, does very good things indeed. In another, a Prime Minister of England, who has ruined himself by railway speculations, hits off some of our national characteristics very happily, frequently making incidental mention of 'Vishmingster,' 'Reegenstreet,' and other places with which you are well acquainted. 'Sir Fakson' is one of the characters in another play—*English to the Core*; and I saw a Lord Mayor of London at one of the small theatres the other night, looking uncommonly well in a stage-coachman's waistcoat, the order of the Garter, and a very low-crowned broad-brimmed hat, not unlike a dustman.

I was at Geneva at the time of the revolution. The moderation and mildness of the successful party were beyond all praise. Their appeals to the people of all parties—printed and pasted on the walls—have no parallel that I know of, in history, for their real good sterling Christianity and tendency to promote the happiness of mankind. My sympathy is strongly with the Swiss radicals. They know what Catholicity is; they see, in some of their own valleys, the poverty, ignorance, misery, and bigotry it always brings in its train wherever it is triumphant; and they would root it out of their children's way at any price. I fear the end of the struggle will be that some Catholic power will step in to crush the dangerously well-educated republics (very dangerous to such neighbours); but there is a spirit in the people, or I very much

mistake them, that will trouble the Jesuits there many years, and shake their altar-steps for them.

This is a poor return (I look down and see the end of the paper) for your letter, but in its cordial spirit of reciprocal friendship, it is not so bad a one if you could read it as I do, and it eases my mind and discharges my conscience. We are coming home, please God, at the end of March. You will be glad, I know, to hear that *Dombey* is doing wonders, and that the Christmas book shot far ahead of its predecessors. I hope you will like *the last chapter of No. 5*. If you can spare me a scrap of your handwriting in token of forgiveness, do; if not, I'll come and beg your pardon on the thirty-first of March.—Ever believe me.

Cordially and truly yours.

CHESTER PLACE, *Tuesday Night*.

MY DEAREST GEORGY,

So far from having 'got through my agonies,' <sup>Miss Hogarth.</sup> as you benevolently hope, I have not yet begun them. Now, on this *ninth of the month* I have not yet written a single slip. What could I do; house-hunting at first, and beleaguered all day to-day and yesterday by furniture that must be altered, and things that must be put away? My wretchedness, just now, is inconceivable. Tell Anne, by the bye (not with reference to my wretchedness, but in connection with the arrangements generally), that I can't get on at all without her.

If Kate has not mentioned it, get Katey and Mamey to write and send a letter to Charley; of course not hinting at our being here. He wants to hear from them.

Poor little Hall <sup>1</sup> is dead, as you will have seen, I daresay, in the paper. This house is very cheerful on the drawing-room floor and above, looking into the park on one side and Albany Street on the other. Forster is mild. Maclise, exceedingly bald on the crown of his head. Roche has just come to know if he may 'blow datter light.'

Ever affectionately.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Hall, of the firm of Chapman and Hall.



*Friday, Ninth April, 1847.*

Mr. John  
Forster.

MY DEAR FORSTER,—Your messenger didn't wait, or cook, who took the note in, said I wasn't at home—or summat of that sort.

The dinner-hour is *six* to-morrow. I have only just begun. I have been trying for three or four days, but really have only just begun. I am particularly anxious not to anticipate in this No. what I design for the next, and consequently must invent and plan for it.

We got a box from Buckstone (Stanny, Mac, and I), and went to the Adelphi the night before last. I think that performance of Miss Woolgar's in *The Flowers of the Forest* the most remarkable and complete piece of melodrama I have ever seen upon the stage; and indeed I question whether I have ever seen anything better. It perfectly amazed me; it is so admirably considered and made out.

Jeffrey is coming here this afternoon at four. I received a note from him this morning. From what he says, I should infer that they will be off with the sun—or wind—to-morrow, and that you won't see Empson<sup>1</sup> therefore if you don't see him to-day.

Deepest of despondency (as usual in commencing Nos.).

Ever affectionately.

CHESTER PLACE, *Monday, Third May, 1847.*

Mr.  
Edward  
Chapman.

MY DEAR SIR,—Here is a young lady—Miss Power, Lady Blessington's niece—has 'gone and been' and translated a story by Georges Sand, the French writer, which she has printed, and got four woodcuts engraved for. She wants to get it published—something in the form of the Christmas books. I know the story, and it is a very fine one.

Will you do it for her? There is no other risk than putting a few covers on a few copies. Half-profits is what she expects and no loss. She has made appeal to me, and if there is to be a hard-hearted ogre in the business at all, I would rather that it should be you than I; so I have told her I would make proposals to your mightiness.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Empson was the son-in-law of Lord Jeffrey.

Answer this straightway, for I have no doubt the fair translator thinks I am tearing backwards and forwards in a cab all day to bring the momentous affair to a conclusion.

Faithfully yours.

148 KING'S ROAD, BRIGHTON,  
*Monday, Twenty-fourth May, 1847.*

MY DEAR MAMEY AND KATEY,—I am very glad to receive your nice letter. I am going to tell you something that I hope will please you. It is this: I am coming to London on Thursday, and I mean to bring you both back here with me, to stay until we all come home together on the Saturday. I hope you like this.

Miss  
Dickens  
and Miss  
Katey  
Dickens.

Tell John to come with the carriage to the London Bridge Station, on Thursday morning at ten o'clock, and to wait there for me. I will then come home and fetch you.

Mamma and Auntey and Charley send their loves. I send mine too, to Walley, Spim, and Alfred, and Sydney.—Always,  
my dears, Your affectionate Papa.

148 KING'S ROAD, BRIGHTON, *Twenty-sixth May, 1847.*

MY DEAR KNOWLES,—I have learned, I hope, from the art we both profess (if you will forgive this classification of myself with you) to respect a man of genius in his mistakes, no less than in his triumphs. You have so often read the human heart well that I can readily forgive your reading mine ill, and greatly wronging me by the supposition that any sentiment towards you but honour and respect has ever found a place in it.

Mr. James  
Sheridan  
Knowles.

You write as few lines which, dying, you would wish to blot, as most men. But if you ever know me better, as I hope you may (the fault shall not be mine if you do not), I know you will be glad to have received the assurance that some part of your letter has been written on the sand and that the wind has already blown over it.

Faithfully yours always.

REGENT'S PARK, LONDON, *Friday, Fourth June, 1847.*

MY DEAR SIR,—I have rarely, if ever, seen a more remarkable effort of what I may call intel-

Dr.  
Hodgson.



lectual memory than the enclosed. It is evidence, I think, of very uncommon power. I have read it with the greatest interest and surprise, and I am truly obliged to you for giving me the opportunity. If you should see no objection to telling the young lady herself this much, pray do so, as it is sincere praise.

Your criticism of Coombe's pamphlet is as justly felt as it is earnestly and strongly written. I undergo more astonishment and disgust in connection with that question of education almost every day of my life than is awakened in me by any other member of the whole magazine of social monsters that are walking about in these times.

You were in my thoughts when your letter arrived this morning, for we have a half-formed idea of reviving our old amateur theatrical company for a special purpose, and even of bringing it bodily to Manchester and Liverpool, on which your opinion would be very valuable. If we should decide on Monday, when we meet, to pursue our idea in this warm weather, I will explain it to you in detail, and ask counsel of you in regard of a performance in Liverpool. Meantime it is mentioned to no one.

Your interest in *Dombey* gives me unaffected pleasure. I hope you will find no reason to think worse of it as it proceeds. There is a great deal to do—one or two things among the rest that society will not be the worse, I hope, for thinking about a little.

May I beg to be remembered to Mrs. Hodgson? You always remember me yourself, I hope, as one who has a hearty interest in all you do and in all you have so admirably done for the advancement of the best objects.—Always believe me

Very faithfully yours.

REGENT'S PARK, LONDON, *Twelfth June*, 1847.

Dr.  
Hodgson.

MY DEAR SIR,—I write to you in reference to a scheme to which you may, perhaps, already have seen some allusion in the London *Athenæum* of to-day.

The party of amateurs connected with literature and art, who acted in London two years ago, have resolved to play again at one of the large theatres here for the benefit of

Leigh Hunt, and to make a great appeal to all classes of society in behalf of a writer who should have received long ago, but has not yet, some enduring return from his country for all he has undergone and all the good he has done. It is believed that such a demonstration by literature on behalf of literature, and such a mark of sympathy by authors and artists, for one who has written so well, would be of more service, present and prospective, to Hunt than almost any other means of help that could be devised. And we know, from himself, that it would be most gratifying to his own feelings.

The arrangements are, as yet, in an imperfect state; for the date of their being carried out depends on our being able to get one of the large theatres before the close of the present London season. In the event of our succeeding, we propose acting in London, on Wednesday the fourteenth of July, and on Monday the nineteenth. On the first occasion we shall play *Every Man in his Humour*, and a farce; on the second, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and a farce.

But we do not intend to stop here. Believing that Leigh Hunt has done more to instruct the young men of England, and to lend a helping hand to those who educate themselves, than any writer in England, we are resolved to come down, in a body, to Liverpool and Manchester, and to act one night at each place. And the object of my letter is, to ask you, as the representative of the great educational establishment of Liverpool, whether we can count on your active assistance; whether you will form a committee to advance our object; and whether, if we send you our circulars and addresses, you will endeavour to secure us a full theatre, and to enlist the general sympathy and interest in behalf of the cause we have at heart?

I address, by this post, a letter, which is almost the counterpart of the present, to the honorary secretaries of the Manchester Athenæum. If we find in both towns such a response as we confidently expect, I would propose, on behalf of my friends, that the Liverpool and Manchester Institutions should decide for us, at which town we shall first appear, and which play we shall act in each place.



I forbear entering into any more details, however, until I am favoured with your reply.—Always believe me, dear Sir,  
Faithfully your Friend.

1 DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Thirteenth June, 1847.*

Mr.  
William  
Sandys.

DEAR SIR,—Many thanks for your kind note. I shall hope to see you when we return to town, from which we shall now be absent (with a short interval in next month) until October. Your account of the Cornishmen gave me great pleasure; and if I were not sunk in engagements so far, that the crown of my head is invisible to my nearest friends, I should have asked you to make me known to them. The new dialogue I will ask you by and by to let me see. I have, for the present, abandoned the idea of sinking a shaft in Cornwall.

I have sent your Shakesperian extracts to Collier.<sup>1</sup> It is a great comfort, to my thinking, that so little is known concerning the poet. It is a fine mystery; and I tremble every day lest something should come out. If he had had a Boswell, society wouldn't have respected his grave, but would calmly have had his skull in the phrenological shop-windows.—  
Believe me, Faithfully yours.

CHESTER PLACE, *Fourteenth June, 1847.*

Mr. H. P.  
Smith.

MY DEAR SMITH,—Haldimand stayed at No. 7 Connaught Place, Hyde Park, when I saw him yesterday. But he was going to cross to Boulogne to-day.

The young Pariah seems pretty comfortable. He is of a cosmopolitan spirit I hope, and stares with a kind of leaden satisfaction at his spoons, without afflicting himself much about the established church. Affectionately yours.

PS.—I think of bringing an action against you for a new sort of breach of promise, and calling all the bishops to estimate the damage of having our christening postponed for a fortnight. It appears to me that I shall get a good deal of money in this way. If you have any compromise to offer, my solicitors are Dodson and Fogg.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. John Payne Collier.

REGENT'S PARK, LONDON, *Seventeenth June*, 1847.

DEAR SIR,—In the hope that I may consider myself personally introduced to you by Dr. Hodgson, of Liverpool, I take the liberty of addressing you in this form. Mr.  
Alexander  
Ireland. /

I hear from that friend of ours, that you are greatly interested in all that relates to Mr. Leigh Hunt, and that you will be happy to promote our design in reference to him. Allow me to assure you of the gratification with which I have received this intelligence, and of the importance we shall attach to all your valuable co-operation.

I have received a letter from Mr. Langley, of the Athenæum, informing me that a committee is in course of formation, composed of directors of that institution (acting as private gentlemen) and others. May I hope to find that you are one of this body, and that I may soon hear of its proceedings, and be in communication with it?

Allow me to thank you beforehand for your interest in the cause, and to look forward to the pleasure of doing so in person, when I come to Manchester.—Dear Sir,

Very faithfully yours.

ATHENÆUM CLUB, LONDON, *Saturday, Twenty-sixth June*, 1847.

MY DEAR SIR,—The news of Mr. Hunt's pension is quite true. We do not propose to act in London after this change in his affairs, but we do still distinctly propose to act in Manchester and Liverpool. I have set forth the plain state of the case in a letter to Mr. Robinson by this post (a counterpart of which I have addressed to Liverpool), and to which, in the midst of a laborious correspondence on the subject, I beg to refer to you. Mr.  
Alexander  
Ireland.

It will be a great satisfaction to us to believe that we shall still be successful in Manchester. There is great and urgent need why we should be so, I assure you.

If you can help to bring the matter speedily into a practical and plain shape, you will render Hunt the greatest service. /

I fear, in respect to your kind invitation, that neither Jerrold nor I will feel at liberty to accept it. There was a pathetic proposal among us that we should 'keep together';



and, as president of the society, I am bound, I fear, to stand by the brotherhood with particular constancy. Nor do I think that we shall have more than one very short evening in Manchester.

I write in great haste. The sooner I can know (at Broadstairs, in Kent) the Manchester and Liverpool nights, and what the managers say, the better (I hope) will be the entertainments.—My dear Sir,      Very faithfully yours.

PS.—I enclose a copy of our London circular, issued before the granting of the pension.

BROADSTAIRS, KENT, *Second July*, 1847.

Miss Power.      MY DEAR MISS POWER,—Let me thank you, very sincerely, for your kind note and for the little book. I read the latter on my way down here with the greatest pleasure. It is a charming story gracefully told, and very gracefully and worthily translated. I have not been better pleased with a book for a long time.

I cannot say I take very kindly to the illustrations. They are a long way behind the tale to my thinking. The artist understands it very well, I dare say, but does not express his understanding of it, in the least degree, to any sense of mine.

Ah Rosherville! That fated Rosherville, when shall we see it! Perhaps in one of those intervals when I am up to town from here, and suddenly appear at Gore House, somebody will propose an excursion there, next day. If anybody does, somebody else will be ready to go. So this deponent maketh oath and saith.

I am looking out upon a dark gray sea with a keen north-east wind blowing it in shore. It is more like late autumn than midsummer, and there is a howling in the air as if the latter were in a very hopeless state indeed. The very Banshee of Midsummer is rattling the windows drearily while I write. There are no visitors in the place but children, and they (my own included) have all got the hooping-cough, and go about the beach choking incessantly. A miserable wanderer lectured in a library last night about astronomy; but being in utter solitude he





BROADSTAIRS, KENT, *Eleventh July*, 1847.Mr.  
Alexander  
Ireland.

MY DEAR SIR,—I am much indebted to you for the present of your notice of Hunt's books. I cannot praise it better or more appropriately than by saying it is in Hunt's own spirit, and most charmingly expressed. I had the most sincere and hearty pleasure in reading it.

Your announcement of 'The Working Man's Life' had attracted my attention by reason of the title, which had a great interest for me. I hardly know if there is something wanting to my fancy in a certain genuine simple air I had looked for in the first part. But there is great promise in it, and I shall be earnest to know how it proceeds.

Now, to leave these pleasant matters, and resume my managerial character, which I shall be heartily glad (between ourselves) to lay down again, though I have none but pleasant correspondents, and the most easily governable company of actors on earth.

I have written to Mr. Robinson by this post that I wish these words, from our original London circular, to stand at top of the bills, after 'For the benefit of Mr. Leigh Hunt':

'It is proposed to devote a portion of the proceeds of this benefit to the assistance of another celebrated writer, whose literary career is at an end, and who has no provision for the decline of his life.'

I have also told him that there is no objection to its being known that this is Mr. Poole, the author of *Paul Pry*, and *Little Pedlington*, and many comic pieces of great merit, and whose farce of *Turning the Tables* we mean to finish with in Manchester. Beyond what he will get from these benefits, he has no resource in this wide world, *I know*. There are reasons which make it desirable to get this fact abroad, and if you see no objection to paragraphing it at your office (sending the paragraph round, if you should please, to the other Manchester papers), I should be much obliged to you.

You may like to know, as a means of engendering a more complete individual interest in our actors, who they are.

Jerrold and myself you have heard of; Mr. George Cruikshank and Mr. Leech (the best caricaturists of any time perhaps) need no introduction. Mr. Frank Stone (a Manchester man) and Mr. Egg are artists of high reputation. Mr. Forster is the critic of the *Examiner*, the author of *The Lives of the Statesmen of the Commonwealth*, and very distinguished as a writer in the *Edinburgh Review*. Mr. Lewes is also a man of great attainment in polite literature, and the author of a novel published not long since, called *Ranthorpe*. Mr. Costello is a periodical writer, and a gentleman renowned as a tourist. Mr. Mark Lemon is a dramatic author, and the editor of *Punch*—a most excellent actor, as you will find. My brothers play small parts, for love, and have no greater note than the Treasury and the City confer on their disciples. Mr. Thompson is a private gentleman. You may know all this, but I thought it possible you might like to hold the key to our full company. Pray use it as you will.—My dear Sir,

Faithfully yours always.

BROADSTAIRS, KENT, *Tuesday, Fourteenth July, 1847.*

MY DEAR MISS POWER,—Though I am hopeless of Rosherville until after the twenty-eighth Miss Power.  
—for am I not beckoned, by angels of charity and by local committees, to Manchester and Liverpool, and to all sorts of bedevilments (if I may be allowed the expression) in the way of managerial miseries in the meantime—here I find myself falling into parenthesis within parenthesis, like Lord Brougham—yet will I joyfully come up to London on Friday, to dine at your house and meet the Dane,<sup>1</sup> whose Books I honour, and whose—to make the sentiment complete, I want something that would sound like ‘Bones, I love!’ but I can’t get anything that unites reason with beauty. You, who have genius and beauty in your own person, will supply the gap in your kindness.

An advertisement in the newspapers mentioning the dinner-time, will be esteemed a favour.

Some wild beasts (in cages) have come down here, and

<sup>1</sup> Hans Christian Andersen.



involved us in 'a whirl of dissipation. A young lady in complete armour—at least, in something that shines very much, and is exceedingly scaley—goes into the den of ferocious lions, tigers, leopards, etc., and pretends to go to sleep upon the principal lion, upon which a rustic keeper, who speaks through his nose, exclaims, 'Behold the abazid power of woobad!' and we all applaud tumultuously.

Seriously, she beats Van Amburgh. And I think the Duke of Wellington must have her painted by Landseer.

My penitent regards to Lady Blessington, Count D'Orsay, and my own Marchioness.—Ever, dear Miss Power,  
Very faithfully yours.

BROADSTAIRS, *Wednesday, Fourth August, 1847.*

Miss  
Dickens.

MY DEAREST MAMEY,—I am delighted to hear that you are going to improve in your spelling, because nobody can write properly without spelling well. But I know you will learn whatever you are taught, because you are always good, industrious, and attentive. That is what I always say of my Mamey.

The note you sent me this morning is a very nice one, and the spelling is beautiful.—Always, my dear Mamey,  
Your affectionate Papa.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE,  
*Tuesday Morning, Twenty-third November, 1847.*

Mr. W. O.  
Macready.

MY DEAR MACREADY,—I am in the whirlwind of finishing a number with a crisis in it; but I can't fall to work without saying, in so many words, that I feel all words insufficient to tell you what I think of you after a night like last night. The multitudes of new tokens by which I know you for a great man, the swelling within me of my love for you, the pride I have in you, the majestic reflection I see in you of all the passions and affections that make up our mystery, throw me into a strange kind of transport that has no expression but in a mute sense of an attachment, which, in truth and fervency, is worthy of its subject.

What is this to say! Nothing, God knows, and yet I cannot leave it unsaid. Ever, affectionately yours.

PS.—I never saw you more gallant and free than in the gallant and free scenes last night. It was perfectly captivating to behold you. However, it shall not interfere with my determination to address you as Old Parr in all future time.

EDINBURGH, *Thursday, Thirteenth December, 1847.*

MY DEAR GEORGY,—I ‘take up my pen,’ as <sup>Miss</sup> <sup>Hogarth.</sup> the young ladies write, to let you know how we are getting on; and as I shall be obliged to put it down again very soon, here goes. We lived with very hospitable people in a very splendid house near Glasgow, and were perfectly comfortable. The meeting was the most stupendous thing as to numbers, and the most beautiful as to colours and decorations, I ever saw. The Inimitable did wonders. His grace, elegance, and eloquence enchanted all beholders. *Kate didn’t go!* having been taken ill on the railroad between here and Glasgow.

It has been snowing, sleeting, thawing, and freezing, sometimes by turns and sometimes all together, since the night before last. Lord Jeffrey’s household are in town here, not at Craigcrook, and jogging on in a cosy, old-fashioned, comfortable sort of way.

Kate sends her best love. She is a little poorly still, but nothing to speak of. She is frightfully anxious that her not having been to the great demonstration should be kept a secret. But I say that, like murder, it will out, and that to hope to veil such a tremendous disgrace from the general intelligence is out of the question. In one of the Glasgow papers she is elaborately described. I rather think Miss Alison, who is seventeen, was taken for her, and sat for the portrait.

Best love from both of us, to Charley, Mamey, Katey, Wally, Chickenstalker, Skittles, and the Hoshen Peck; last, and not least, to you. We talked of you at the Macready’s party on Monday night. I hope — came out lively, also that — was truly amiable. Finally, that — took everybody to their carriages, and that — wept a good



deal during the festivities? God bless you. Take care of yourself, for the sake of mankind in general.

Ever affectionately, dear Georgy.

<sup>1</sup> A thousand thanks, my dear Andersen, for  
 Hans your kind and very valuable recollection of  
 Christian me in your Christmas book. I am very proud  
 Andersen. of it, and feel deeply honoured by it; I cannot tell you how much I value such a token of acknowledgment from a man with the genius which you are possessed of.

Your book made my Christmas hearth very happy. We are all enchanted by it. The little boy, the old man, and the tin soldier are especially my favourites. I have repeatedly read that story, and read it with the most unspeakable pleasure.

I was a few days ago at Edinburgh, where I saw some of your friends, who talked much about you. Come again to England, soon! But whatever you do, do not stop writing, because we cannot bear to lose a single one of your thoughts. They are too true and simply beautiful to be kept safe only in your own head.

We returned some time since from the sea-coast, where I bade you adieu, and are now at our own house. My wife tells me that I must give you her kind greeting. Her sister tells me the same. The same say all my children. And as we have all the same sentiments, I beg you to receive the summary in an affectionate greeting from

Your sincere and admiring Friend.

1848

#### NARRATIVE

IN March of this year Charles Dickens went with his wife for two or three weeks to Brighton, accompanied by Mrs. Macready, who was in delicate health, and we give a letter

<sup>1</sup> Extracted from *The Story of my Life*, by Hans Christian Andersen. This letter is not dated, but it would be written some time in the year 1847.

to Mr. Macready from Brighton. Early in the year, *Dombey and Son* was finished, and Charles Dickens was again busy with an amateur play, with the same associates and some new adherents; the proceeds being, at first, intended to go towards the curatorship of Shakespeare's house, which post was to be given to Mr. Sheridan Knowles. The endowment was abandoned, upon the town and council of Stratford-on-Avon taking charge of the house; the large sum realised by the performances being handed over to Mr. Sheridan Knowles. The play selected was *The Merry Wives of Windsor*; the farce, *Love, Law, and Physic*. There were two performances at the Haymarket in April, at one of which her Majesty and the Prince Consort were present; and in July there were performances at Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, Edinburgh, and Glasgow. Some ladies accompanied the 'strollers' on this theatrical provincial tour, and Mrs. Dickens and her sister were of the party. Many of the following letters bear reference to these plays.

In this summer his eldest sister Fanny (Mrs. Burnett) died, and there are sorrowful allusions to her illness in several of the letters.

The autumn months were again spent at Broadstairs, where Charles Dickens wrote *The Haunted Man*, which was illustrated by Mr. Frank Stone, Mr. Leech, and others. At the end of the year and at the end of his work, he took another short holiday at Brighton with his wife and sister-in-law; and the letters to Mr. Stone on the subject of his illustrations to *The Haunted Man* are written from Brighton. The first letters which we have to Mr. Mark Lemon come in this year. We regret to have been unable to procure any letters addressed to Mr. Leech, with whom, as with Mr. Lemon, Charles Dickens was very intimately associated for many years.

Also, we have the beginning of his correspondence with Mr. Charles Kent. He wrote (an unusual thing for him to do) to the editor of the *Sun* newspaper, begging him to thank the writer of a particularly sympathetic and earnest review of *Dombey and Son*, which appeared in the *Sun* at



the close of the book. Mr. Charles Kent replied in his proper person, and from that time dates a close friendship and constant correspondence.

With the letter to Mr. Forster we give, as a note, a letter which Baron Taüchnitz published in his edition of Mr. Forster's *Life of Oliver Goldsmith*.

Mr. Peter Cunningham, as an important member of the 'Shakespeare's House' committee, managed the *untheatrical* part of this Amateur Provincial Tour, and was always pleasantly connected with the plays.

The book alluded to in the last letter for this year, to be dedicated to Charles Dickens' daughters by Mr. Mark Lemon, was called the *The Enchanted Doll*.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Twenty-sixth February*, 1848.

Mr. Charles Babbage. MY DEAR SIR,—Pray let thank you for your pamphlet.

I confess that I am one of the unconvinced grumblers, and that I doubt the present or future existence of any government in England, strong enough to convert the people to your income-tax principles. But I do not the less appreciate the ability with which you advocate them, nor am I the less gratified by any mark of your remembrance.

Faithfully yours always.

JUNCTION HOUSE, BRIGHTON, *Second March*, 1848.

Mr. W. C. Macready. MY DEAR MACREADY,—We have migrated from the Bedford and come here, where we are very comfortably (not to say gorgeously) accommodated. Mrs. Macready is certainly better already, and I really have very great hopes that she will come back in a condition so blooming, as to necessitate the presentation of a piece of plate to the undersigned trainer.

You mean to come down on Sunday and on Sunday week. If you don't, I shall immediately take the *Victoria*, and start Mr. —, of the Theatre Royal, Haymarket, as a smashing tragedian. Pray don't impose upon me this cruel necessity.

I think Lamartine, so far, one of the best fellows in the world; and I have lively hopes of that great people establishing a noble republic. Our court had best be careful not to overdo it in respect of sympathy with ex-royalty and ex-nobility. These are not times for such displays, as, it strikes me, the people in some of our great towns would be apt to express pretty plainly.

However, we'll talk of all this on these Sundays, and Mr.— shall *not* be raised to the pinnacle of fame.—  
Ever affectionately yours, My dear Macready.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Monday Evening, Tenth April, 1848.*

MY DEAR BULWER LYTTON,—I confess to small faith in any American profits having international copyright for their aim. But I will carefully consider Blackwood's letter (when I get it) and will call upon you and tell you what occurs to me in reference to it, before I communicate with that northern light.

Sir Edward  
Bulwer  
Lytton.

I have been 'going' to write to you for many a day past, to thank you for your kindness to the General Theatrical Fund people, and for your note to me; but I have waited until I should hear of your being stationary somewhere. What you said of *The Battle of Life* gave me great pleasure. I was thoroughly wretched at having to use the idea for so short a story. I did not see its full capacity until it was too late to think of another subject, and I have always felt that I might have done a great deal better if I had taken it for the groundwork of a more extended book. But for an insuperable aversion I have to trying back in such a case, I should certainly forge that bit of metal again, as you suggest—one of these days perhaps.

I have not been special constable myself to-day—thinking there was rather an epidemic in that wise abroad. I walked over and looked at the preparations, without any baggage of staff, warrant, or affidavit. Very faithfully yours.



DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, YORK GATE, REGENT'S PARK  
*Friday, Fourteenth April, 1848.*

[*Private.*]

Editor of  
 the *Sun*.

Mr. Charles Dickens presents his compliments to the Editor of the *Sun*, and begs that gentleman will have the goodness to convey to the writer of the notice of *Dombey and Son*, in last evening's paper, Mr. Dickens' warmest acknowledgments and thanks. The sympathy expressed in it is so very earnestly and unaffectedly stated, that it is particularly welcome and gratifying to Mr. Dickens, and he feels very desirous indeed to convey that assurance to the writer of that frank and genial farewell.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Fourteenth April, 1848.*<sup>1</sup>

Mrs.  
 Cowden  
 Clarke.

DEAR MRS. COWDEN CLARKE,—I did not understand, when I had the pleasure of conversing with you the other evening, that you had really considered the subject, and desired to play. But I am very glad to understand it now; and I am sure there will be a universal sense among us of the grace and appropriateness of such a proceeding. Falstaff (who depends very much on Mrs. Quickly) may have in his modesty, some timidity about acting with an amateur actress. But I have no question, as you have studied the part, and long wished to play it, that you will put him completely at his ease on the first night of your rehearsal. Will you, towards that end, receive this as a solemn 'call' to rehearsal of *The Merry Wives* at Miss Kelly's theatre, to-morrow (Saturday) *week*, at seven in the evening?

And will you let me suggest another point for your consideration? On the night when *The Merry Wives* will *not* be played, and when *Every Man in his Humour* will be, Kenny's farce of *Love, Law, and Physic* will be acted. In that farce there is a very good character (one Mrs. Hilary, which I have seen Mrs. Orger, I think, act to admiration),

<sup>1</sup> This and following Letters to Mr. and Mrs. Cowden Clarke appeared in a volume entitled *Recollections of Writers*.

that would have been played by Mrs. C. Jones, if she had acted Dame Quickly, as we at first intended. If you find yourself quite comfortable and at ease among us in Mrs. Quickly, would you like to take this other part too? It is an excellent farce, and is safe, I hope, to be very well done.

We do not play to purchase the house (which may be positively considered as paid for), but towards endowing a perpetual curatorship of it, for some eminent literary veteran. And I think you will recognise in this even a higher and more gracious object than the securing, even, of the debt incurred for the house itself.

Believe me, very faithfully yours.

1 DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, YORK GATE, REGENT'S PARK,  
*Eighteenth April, 1848.*

DEAR SIR,—Pray let me repeat to you personally what I expressed in my former note, and allow me to assure you, as an illustration of my sincerity, that I have never addressed a similar communication to anybody except on one occasion. Faithfully yours.

Mr. Charles  
Kent.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Saturday, Twenty-second April, 1848.*

MY DEAR FORSTER,—I finished *Goldsmith* yesterday, after dinner, having read it from the first page to the last with the greatest care and attention.

Mr. John  
Forster.

As a picture of the time, I really think it impossible to give it too much praise. It seems to me to be the very essence of all about the time that I have ever seen in biography or fiction, presented in most wise and humane lights, and in a thousand new and just aspects. I have never liked Johnson half so well. Nobody's contempt for Boswell ought to be capable of increase, but I have never seen him in my mind's eye half so plainly. The introduction of him is quite a masterpiece. I should point to that, if I didn't know the author, as being done by somebody with a remarkably vivid conception of what he narrated, and a most admirable and fanciful power of communicating it to another. All about Reynolds is charming; and the first account of



the Literary Club and of Beauclerc as excellent a piece of description as ever I read in my life. But to read the book is to be in the time. It lives again in as fresh and lively a manner as if it were presented on an impossibly good stage by the very best actors that ever lived, or by the real actors come out of their graves on purpose.

And as to Goldsmith himself, and *his* life, and the tracing of it out in his own writings, and the manful and dignified assertion of him without any sobs, whines, or convulsions of any sort, it is throughout a noble achievement, of which, apart from any private and personal affection for you, I think (and really believe) I should feel proud, as one who had no indifferent perception of these books of his—to the best of my remembrance—when little more than a child. I was a little afraid in the beginning, when he committed those very discouraging imprudences, that you were going to champion him somewhat indiscriminately; but I very soon got over that fear, and found reason in every page to admire the sense, calmness, and moderation with which you make the love and admiration of the reader cluster about him from his youth, and strengthen with his strength—and weakness too, which is better still.

I don't quite agree with you in two small respects. First, I question very much whether it would have been a good thing for every great man to have had his Boswell, inasmuch that I think that two Boswells, or three at most, would have made great men extraordinarily false, and would have set them on always playing a part, and would have made distinguished people about them for ever restless and distrustful. I can imagine a succession of Boswells bringing about a tremendous state of falsehood in society, and playing the very devil with confidence and friendship. Secondly, I cannot help objecting to that practice (begun, I think, or greatly enlarged by Hunt) of italicising lines and words and whole passages in extracts, without some very special reason indeed. It does appear to be a kind of assertion of the editor over the reader—almost over the author himself—which grates upon me. The author might almost as well do it himself to my thinking, as a disagreeable thing; and it is such a strong contrast

to the modest, quiet, tranquil beauty of *The Deserted Village*, for instance, that I would almost as soon hear 'the town crier' speak the lines. The practice always reminds me of a man seeing a beautiful view, and not thinking how beautiful it is half so much as what he shall say about it.

In that picture at the close of the third book (a most beautiful one) of Goldsmith sitting looking out of window at the Temple trees, you speak of the 'gray-eyed' rooks. Are you sure they are 'gray-eyed'? The raven's eye is a deep lustrous black, and so, I suspect, is the rook's, except when the light shines full into it.

I have reserved for a closing word—though I *don't* mean to be eloquent about it, being far too much in earnest—the admirable manner in which the case of the literary man is stated throughout this book. It is splendid. I don't believe that any book was ever written, or anything ever done or said, half so conducive to the dignity and honour of literature as *The Life and Adventures of Oliver Goldsmith*, by J. F., of the Inner Temple. The gratitude of every man who is content to rest his station and claims quietly on literature, and to make no feint of living by anything else, is your due for evermore. I have often said, here and there, when you have been at work upon the book, that I was sure it would be; and I shall insist on that debt being due to you (though there will be no need for insisting about it) as long as I have any tediousness and obstinacy to bestow on anybody. Lastly, I never will hear the biography compared with Boswell's except under vigorous protest. For I do say that it is mere folly to put into opposite scales a book, however amusing and curious, written by an unconscious coxcomb like that, and one which surveys and grandly understands the characters of all the illustrious company that move in it.

My dear Forster, I cannot sufficiently say how proud I am of what you have done, or how sensible I am of being so tenderly connected with it. When I look over this note, I feel as if I had said no part of what I think; and yet if I were to write another I should say no more, for I can't get it out. I desire no better for my fame, when my personal dustiness shall be past the control of my love of order, than such a



biographer and such a critic. And again I say, most solemnly, that literature in England has never had, and probably never will have, such a champion as you are, in right of this book.<sup>1</sup>

Ever affectionately.

ATHENÆUM, *Thursday, Fourth May, 1848.*

Rev. James  
White.

MY DEAR WHITE,—I have not been able to write to you until now. I have lived in hope that Kate and I might be able to run down to see you and yours for a day, before our design for forcing the government to make Knowles the first custodian of the Shakespeare house should come off. But I am so perpetually engaged in drilling the forces, that I see no hope of making a pleasant expedition to the Isle of Wight until about the twentieth. Then I shall hope to do so for one day. But of this I will advise you further, in due course.

My doubts about the house you speak of are twofold. First, I could not leave town so soon as May, having affairs to arrange for a sick sister. And secondly, I fear Bonchurch is not sufficiently bracing for my chickens, who thrive best in breezy and cool places. This has set me thinking, sometimes of the Yorkshire coast, sometimes of Dover. I would not have the house at Bonchurch reserved for me, therefore. But if it should be empty, we will go and look at it in a body. I reserve the more serious part of my letter until the last, my dear White, because it comes from the bottom of my heart.

<sup>1</sup> LETTER OF BARON TAÜCHNITZ

Having had the privilege to see a letter which the late Mr. Charles Dickens wrote to the author of this work upon its first appearance, and which there was no intention to publish in England, it became my lively wish to make it known to the readers of my edition.

I therefore addressed an earnest request to Mr. Forster, that he would permit the letter to be prefixed to a reprint not designed for circulation in England, where I could understand his reluctance to sanction its publication. Its varied illustration of the subject of the book, and its striking passages of personal feeling and character, led me also to request that I might be allowed to present it in facsimile.

Mr. Forster complied; and I am most happy to be thus enabled to give to my public, on the following pages, so attractive and so interesting a letter, reproduced in the exact form in which it was written, by the most popular and admired of writers—too early gone.

TAÜCHNITZ.

Leipsic, *May 23, 1873.*

None of your friends have thought and spoken oftener of you and Mrs. White than we have these many weeks past. I should have written to you, but was timid of intruding on your sorrow. What you say, and the manner in which you tell me I am connected with it in your recollection of your dear child, now among the angels of God, gives me courage to approach your grief—to say what sympathy we have felt with it, and how we have not been unimaginative of those deep sources of consolation to which you have had recourse. The traveller who journeyed in fancy from this world to the next was struck to the heart to find the child he had lost, many years before, building him a tower in heaven. Our blessed Christian hopes do not shout out the belief of love and remembrance still enduring there, but irradiate it and make it sacred. Who should know that better than you, or who more deeply feel the touching truths and comfort of that story in the older book, where, when the bereaved mother is asked, ‘Is it well with the child?’ she answers, ‘It is well.’

God be with you. Kate and her sister desire their kindest love to yourself and Mrs. White, in which I heartily join.—  
Being ever, my dear White,           Your affectionate Friend.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Wednesday, Tenth May, 1848.*

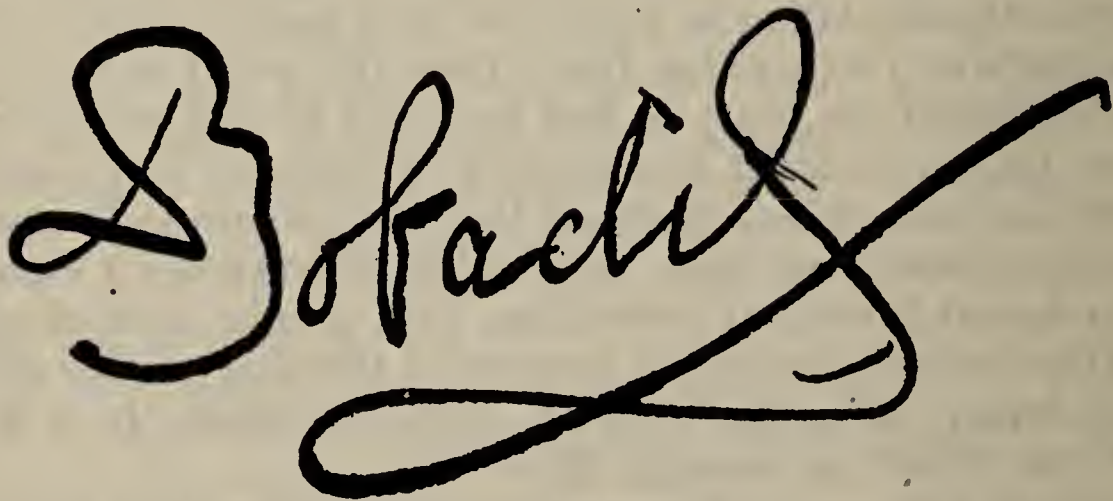
MY DEAR MACREADY,—We are rehearsing at <sup>Mr. W. C.</sup> the Haymarket now, and Lemon mentioned to me <sup>Macready.</sup> yesterday that Webster had asked him if he would sound Forster or me as to your intention of having a farewell benefit before going to America, and whether you would like to have it at the Haymarket, and also as to its being preceded by a short engagement there. I don’t know what your feelings may be on this latter head, but thinking it well that you may know how the land lies in these seas, send you this; the rather (excuse Elizabethan phrase, but you know how indispensable it is to me under existing circumstances)—the rather that I am thereto encouraged by thy consort, who has just come a-visiting here, with thy fair daughters, Mistress Nina and the little Kate. Wherefore most selected friend, perpend at thy leisure, and so God speed thee!—And no more at present from,  
Thine ever.

From my tent in the garden.



## ANOTHER 'BOBADIL' NOTE

I must tell you this, sir, I am no general man; but for William Shakespeare's sake (you may embrace it at what height of favour you please) I will communicate with you on the twenty-first, and do esteem you to be a gentleman of some parts—of a good many parts in truth. I love few words.



At Cobb's, a water-bearer,  
*Eleventh October.*

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Twenty-second May, 1848.*

Mr.  
Alexander  
Ireland.

MY DEAR SIR,—You very likely know that my company of amateurs have lately been playing, with a great reputation, in London here. The object is, 'The endowment of a perpetual curatorship of Shakespeare's house, to be always held by some one distinguished in literature, and more especially in dramatic literature,' and we have already a pledge from the Shakespeare House Committee that Sheridan Knowles shall be recommended to the Government as the first curator. This pledge, which is in the form of a minute, we intend to advertise in our country bills.

Now, on Monday, the Fifth of June, we are going to play at Liverpool, where we are assured of a warm reception, and where an active committee for the issuing of tickets is already formed. Do you think the Manchester people would be equally glad to see us again, and that the house could be filled,

as before, at our old prices? *If yes, would you and our other friends go, at once, to work in the cause?* The only night on which we could play at Manchester would be Saturday, the Third of June. It is possible that the depression of the times may render a performance in Manchester, unwise. In that case I would immediately abandon the idea. But what I want to know, *by return of post*, is, is it safe or unsafe? If the former, here is the bill as it stood in London, with the addition, on the back, of a paragraph I would insert in Manchester, of which immediate use can be made. If the latter, my reason for wishing to settle the point immediately is that we may make another use of that Saturday night.

Assured of your generous feeling I make no apology for troubling you. A sum of money, got together by these means, will insure to literature (I will take good care of that) a proper expression of itself in the bestowal of an essentially literary appointment, not only now but henceforth. Much is to be done, time presses, and the least added the better.

I have addressed a counterpart of this letter to Mr. Francis Robinson, to whom perhaps you will communicate the bill.

Faithfully yours always.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE,  
Monday Evening, Twenty-second July, 1848.

MY DEAR MRS. CLARKE,—I have no energy whatever, I am very miserable. I loathe domestic hearths. I yearn to be a vagabond. Why can't I marry Mary? <sup>1</sup> Why have I seven children—not engaged at sixpence a-night apiece, and dismissable for ever, if they tumble down, not taken on for an indefinite time at a vast expense, and never,—no never, never,—wearing lighted candles round their heads.<sup>2</sup> I am deeply miserable. A real house like this is insupportable, after that canvas farm wherein I was so happy. What is a humdrum dinner at half-past five, with nobody (but John) to see me eat it, compared with *that* soup, and the hundreds of pairs of eyes that watched

Mrs.  
Cowden  
Clarke.

<sup>1</sup> A character in *Used Up*.

<sup>2</sup> As fairies in *Merry Wives*.



its disappearance? Forgive this tear.<sup>1</sup> It is weak and foolish, I know.

Pray let me divide the little excursional excesses of the journey among the gentlemen, as I have always done before, and pray believe that I have had the sincerest pleasure and gratification in your co-operation and society, valuable and interesting on all public accounts, and personally of no mean worth, nor held in slight regard.

You had a sister once, when we were young and happy—I think they called her Emma. If she remember a bright being who once flitted like a vision before her, entreat her to bestow a thought upon the ‘Gas’ of departed joys. I can write no more.

Y. G.<sup>2</sup> THE (DARKENED) G. L. B.<sup>3</sup>

PS.—‘I am completely *blasé*—literally used up. I am dying for excitement. Is it possible that nobody can suggest anything to make my heart beat violently, my hair stand on end—but no!’

Where did I hear those words (so truly applicable to my forlorn condition) pronounced by some delightful creature? In a previous state of existence, I believe.

Oh, Memory, Memory!

Ever yours faithfully.

Y—no C. G—no D. C. D. I think it is—but I don’t know—‘there’s nothing in it.’

1 DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, REGENT’S PARK,  
Twenty-seventh July, 1848.

The Hon.  
Mrs.  
Watson.

MY DEAR MRS. WATSON,—I thought to have been at Rockingham long ago! It seems a century since I, standing in big boots on the Haymarket stage, saw you come into a box upstairs and look down on the humbled Bobadil; since then I have had the kindest of notes from you, since then the finest of venison, and yet I have not seen the Rockingham flowers, and they are withering I daresay.

But we have acted at Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham,

<sup>1</sup> A huge blot of smeared ink.

<sup>3</sup> ‘Gas-Light Boy.’ } Names he had given himself.

<sup>2</sup> ‘Young Gas.’ }

Edinburgh, and Glasgow; and the business of all this—and graver and heavier daily occupation in going to see a dying sister at Hornsey—has so worried me that I have hardly had an hour, far less a week. I shall never be quite happy, in a theatrical point of view, until you have seen me play in an English version of the French piece, *L'Homme Blasé*, which fairly turned the head of Glasgow last Thursday night as ever was; neither shall I be quite happy, in a social point of view, until I have been to Rockingham again. When the first event will come about Heaven knows. The latter will happen about the end of the November fogs and wet weather. For am I not going to Broadstairs now, to walk about on the sea-shore (why don't you bring your rosy children there?) and think what is to be done for Christmas! An idea occurs to me all at once. I must come down and read you that book before it's published. Shall it be a bargain? Were you all in Switzerland? I don't believe *I* ever was. It is such a dream now. I wonder sometimes whether I ever disputed with Haldimand; whether I ever drank mulled wine on the top of the Great St. Bernard, or was jovial at the bottom with company that have stolen into my affection; whether I ever was merry and happy in that valley on the Lake of Geneva, or saw you one evening (when I didn't know you) walking down among the green trees outside Elysée, arm-in-arm with a gentleman in a white hat. I am quite clear that there is no foundation for these visions. But I should like to go somewhere, too, and try it all over again. I don't know how it is, but the ideal world in which my lot is cast has an odd effect on the real one, and makes it chiefly precious for such remembrances. I get quite melancholy over them sometimes, especially when, as now, those great piled-up semicircles of bright faces, at which I have lately been looking—all laughing, earnest and intent—have faded away like dead people. They seem a ghostly moral of everything in life to me.

Kate sends her best love, in which Georgy would as heartily unite, I know, but that she is already gone to Broadstairs with the children. We think of following on Saturday morning, but that depends on my poor sister. Pray give my most cordial remembrances to Watson, and tell him they include



a great deal. I meant to have written you a letter. I don't know what this is. There is no word for it. So, if you will still let me owe you one, I will pay my debt, on the smallest encouragement, from the seaside. Here, there, and elsewhere, I am, with perfect truth, believe me,

Very faithfully yours.

BROADSTAIRS, KENT, *Saturday, Twenty-sixth August, 1848.*

Mr. W. C.  
Macready.

MY DEAR MACREADY,—I was about to write to you when I received your welcome letter. You knew I should come from a somewhat longer distance than this to give you a hearty God-speed and farewell on the eve of your journey. What do you say to Monday, the fourth, or Saturday, the second? Fix either day, let me know which suits you best—at what hour you expect the Inimitable, and the Inimitable will come up to the scratch like a man and a brother.

Permit me, in conclusion, to nail my colours to the mast. Stars and stripes are so-so—showy, perhaps; but my colours is THE UNION JACK, which I am told has the remarkable property of having braved a thousand years the battle AND the breeze. Likewise, it is the flag of Albion—the standard of Britain; and Britons, as I am informed, never, never, never—will—be—slaves!

My sentiment is: Success to the United States as a golden campaigning ground, but blow the United States to 'tarnal smash as an Englishman's place of residence. Gentlemen, are you all charged? Affectionately ever.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Friday, Eighth September, 1848.*

Miss  
Dickens

MY DEAREST MAMEY,—We shall be very glad to see you all again, and we hope you will be very glad to see us. Give my best love to dear Katey, also to Frankey, Alley, and the Peck.

I have had a nice note from Charley just now. He says it is expected at school that when Walter puts on his jacket, all the Miss Kings will fall in love with him to desperation and faint away.—Ever, my dear Mamey.

Most affectionately yours.

1 DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, YORK GATE,  
REGENT'S PARK, *Seventh November, 1848.*

‘A NATIONAL THEATRE’

SIR,—I beg you to accept my best thanks for Mr. Effingham William Wilson. your pamphlet and your obliging note. That such a theatre as you describe would be but worthy of this nation, and would not stand low upon the list of its instructors, I have no kind of doubt. I wish I could cherish a stronger faith than I have in the probability of its establishment on a rational footing within fifty years.

Faithfully yours.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Tuesday, Twenty-first November, 1848.*

MY DEAR STONE,—I send you herewith the second part of the book, which I hope may interest Mr. Frank Stone. you. If you should prefer to have it read to you by the Inimitable rather than to read it, I shall be at home this evening (loin of mutton at half-past five), and happy to do it. The proofs are full of printers' errors, but with the few corrections I have scrawled upon it, you will be able to make out what they mean.

I send you, on the opposite side, a list of the subjects already in hand from this second part. If you should see no other in it that you like (I think it important that you should keep Milly, as you have begun with her), I will, in a day or two, describe you an unwritten subject for the third part of the book.

Ever faithfully.

SUBJECTS IN HAND FOR THE SECOND PART

1. Illuminated page. Tenniel. Representing Redlaw going upstairs, and the Tetterby family below.
2. The Tetterby supper. Leech.
3. The boy in Redlaw's room, munching his food and staring at the fire.



## 230 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

BRIGHTON, *Thursday Night, Twenty-third November, 1848.*

Mr. Frank  
Stone.

MY DEAR STONE,—We are unanimous.

The drawing of Milly on the chair is CHARMING. I cannot tell you how much the little composition and expression please me. Do that, by all means.

I fear she must have a little cap on. There is something coming in the last part, about her having had a dead child, which makes it yet more desirable than the existing text does that she should have that little matronly sign about her. Unless the artist is obdurate indeed, and then he'll do as he likes.

I am delighted to hear that you have your eye on her in the students' room. You will really, pictorially, make the little woman whom I love.—Ever, my dear Stone,

Faithfully yours.

BEDFORD HOTEL, BRIGHTON,  
*Monday Night, Twenty-seventh November, 1848.*

The same.

MY DEAR STONE,—You are a TRUMP, emphatically a TRUMP, and such are my feelings towards you at this moment that I think (but I am not sure) that if I saw you about to place a card on a wrong pack at Bibeck<sup>1</sup> (?), I wouldn't breathe a word of objection.

Sir, there is a subject I have written to-day for the third part, that I think and hope will just suit you. Scene, Tetterby's. Time, morning. The power of bringing back people's memories of sorrow, wrong and trouble, has been given by the ghost to Milly, though she don't know it herself. As she comes along the street, Mr. and Mrs. Tetterby recover themselves, and are mutually affectionate again, and embrace, closing *rather* a good scene of quarrel and discontent. The moment they do so, Johnny (who has seen her in the distance and announced her before, from which moment they begin to recover) cries, 'Here she is!' and she comes in, surrounded by the little Tetterbys, the very spirit of morning, gladness, innocence, hope, love, domesticity, etc. etc. etc. etc.

I would limit the illustration to her and the children, which

<sup>1</sup> A round game of cards, often played at Broadstairs by the family and visitors. We do not know the correct spelling of it.

will make a fitness between it and your other illustrations, and give them all a character of their own. The exact words of the passage I enclose on another slip of paper. Note. There are six boy Tetterbys present (young 'Dolphus is not there), including Johnny; and in Johnny's arms is Moloch, the baby, who is a girl. I hope to be back in town next Monday, and will lose no time in reporting myself to you. Don't wait to send me the drawing of this. I know how pretty she will be with the children in your hands, and should be a stupendous jackass if I had any distrust of it.

The Duke of Cambridge is staying in this house, and they are driving me mad by having Life Guards bands under our windows, playing *our* overtures! I have been at work all day, and am going to wander into the theatre, where (for the comic man's benefit) 'two gentlemen of Brighton' are performing two Counts in a melodrama. I was quite addle-headed for the time being, and think an amateur or so would revive me. No 'Tone! I don't in the abstract approve of Brighton. I couldn't pass an autumn here; but it is a gay place for a week or so; and when one laughs and cries, and suffers the agitation that some men experience over their books, it's a bright change to look out of window, and see the gilt little toys on horseback going up and down before the mighty sea, and thinking nothing of it.

Kate's love and Georgy's. They say you'll contradict every word of this letter. Faithfully ever.

[SLIP OF PAPER ENCLOSED]

'Hurrah! here's Mrs. William!' cried Johnny.

So she was, and all the Tetterby children with her; and as she came in, they kissed her and kissed one another, and kissed the baby and kissed their father and mother, and then ran back and flocked and danced about her, trooping on with her in triumph.

(After which, she is going to say: 'What, are *you* all glad to see me too! Oh, how happy it makes me to find every one so glad to see me this bright morning!')



## 232 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

BEDFORD HOTEL, BRIGHTON, *Twenty-eighth November*, 1848.

Mr. Mark  
Lemon.

MY DEAR MARK,—I assure you, most unaffectedly and cordially, that the dedication of that book to Mary and *Kate* (not Catherine) will be a real delight to me, and to all of us. I know well that you propose it in 'affectionate regard,' and value and esteem it, therefore, in a way not easy of expression.

You were talking of 'coming' down, and now, in a mean and dodging way, you write about 'sending' the second act! I have a propogician to make. Come down on Friday. There is a train leaves London Bridge at two—gets here at four. By that time I shall be ready to strike work. We can take a little walk, dine, discuss, and you can go back in good time next morning. I really think this ought to be done, and indeed *MUST* be done. Write and say it shall be done.

A little management will be required in dramatising the third part, where there are some things I *describe* (for effect's sake, as a matter of art) which must be *said* on the stage. Redlaw is in a new condition of mind, which fact must be shot point-blank at the audience, I suppose, 'as from the deadly level of a gun.' By anybody who knew how to play Milly, I think it might be made very good. Its effect is very pleasant upon me. I have also given Mr. and Mrs. Tetterby another innings.

I went to the play last night—fifth act of *Richard the Third*. Richmond by a stout *lady*, with a particularly well-developed bust, who finished all the speeches with the *soubrette* *simper*. Also, at the end of the tragedy she came forward (still being Richmond) and said, 'Ladies and gentlemen, on Wednesday next the entertainments will be for *My* benefit, when I hope to meet your approbation and support.' Then, having bowed herself into the stage-door, she looked out of it, and said, winningly, 'Won't you come?' which was enormously applauded.

Ever affectionately,

1849

## NARRATIVE

IN the spring of this year Charles Dickens took another holiday at Brighton, accompanied by his wife and sister-in-law and two daughters, and they were joined in their lodgings by Mr. and Mrs. Leech. From Brighton he wrote the letter—as a song—to Mr. Mark Lemon, who had been ill, asking him to pay them a visit.

In the summer, Charles Dickens went with his family, for the first time, to Bonchurch, Isle of Wight, having hired for six months the charming villa, Winterbourne, belonging to the Rev. James White. And now began that close and loving intimacy which for the future was to exist between these two families. Mr. Leech also took a house at Bonchurch. All through this year Charles Dickens was at work upon *David Copperfield*.

On the 14th November he witnessed the execution of a man and his wife—Mr. and Mrs. Manning—for the murder of their lodger. On this occasion he wrote the two letters to the Editor of the *Times*, which we give in their order, advocating the great reform in the mode of executions which he had always earnestly at heart, and which has happily been carried out since that time.

A letter, on the same subject, addressed to Miss Joll, is explained to us by that lady as follows: ‘Soon after the appearance of his *Household Words*, some friends were discussing an article in it on “Private Executions.” They contended that it went to prove Mr. Dickens was an advocate of capital punishment. I, however, took a different view of the matter, and ventured to write and enquire his views on the subject, and to my letter he sent me a courteous reply.’

Mr. Joseph Charles King, the friend of many artists and literary men, conducted a private school, at which the sons of Mr. Macready and of Charles Dickens were being educated at this time.



## 234 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Friday Night, Twenty-sixth January, 1849.*

Mr. Dudley  
Costello.

MY DEAR COSTELLO,—I am desperate! Engaged in links of adamant to a ‘monster in human form’—a remarkable expression I think I remember to have once met with in a newspaper—whom I encountered at Franconi’s, whence I have just returned, otherwise I would have done all three things right heartily, and with my accustomed sweetness. Think of me another time when chops are on the carpet (figuratively speaking), and see if I won’t come and eat ’em!

Ever faithfully yours.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Twenty-third February, 1849.*

Sir Edward  
Bulwer  
Lytton.

MY DEAR SIR EDWARD,—I have not written sooner to thank you for *King Arthur* because I felt sure you would prefer my reading it before I should do so, and because I wished to have an opportunity of reading it with the sincerity and attention which such a composition demands.

This I have done. I do not write to express to you the measure of my gratification and pleasure (for I should find that very difficult to be accomplished to my own satisfaction), but simply to say that I have read the poem, and dwelt upon it with the deepest interest, admiration, and delight; and that I feel proud of it as a very good instance of the genius of a great writer of my own time. I should feel it as a kind of treason to what has been awakened in me by the book, if I were to try to set off my thanks to you, or if I were tempted into being diffuse in its praise. I am too earnest on the subject to have any misgiving but that I shall convey something of my earnestness to you, in the briefest and most unaffected flow of expression.

Accept it for what a genuine word of homage is worth, and believe me,

Faithfully yours.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Tuesday Night, Twenty-seventh February, 1849.*

Miss  
Dickens.

MY DEAREST MAMEY,—I am not engaged on the evening of your birthday. But even if I had an engagement of the most particular kind, I should excuse

myself from keeping it, so that I might have the pleasure of celebrating at home, and among my children, the day that gave me such a dear and good daughter as you.

Ever affectionately yours.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Fifth May, 1849.*

MY DEAR SIR,—I am very sorry to say that my Orphan Working School vote is promised in behalf of an unfortunate young orphan, who, after being canvassed for, polled for, written for, quarrelled for, fought for, called for, and done all kinds of things for, by ladies who wouldn't go away and wouldn't be satisfied with anything anybody said or did for them, was floored at the last election and comes up to the scratch next morning, for the next election, fresher than ever. I devoutly hope he may get in, and be lost sight of for evermore.

Mr. C.  
Cowden  
Clarke.

Pray give my kindest regards to my quondam Quickly, and believe me,

Faithfully yours.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Twenty-fifth May, 1849.*

MY DEAR STANFIELD,—No—no—no! Murder, murder! Madness and misconception! Any *one* of the subjects—not the whole. Oh, blessed star of early morning, what do you think I am made of, that I should, on the part of any man, prefer such a pig-headed, calf-eyed, donkey-eared, imp-hoofed request!

Mr.  
Clarkson  
Stanfield,  
R.A.

Says my friend to me, 'Will you ask *your* friend, Mr. Stanfield, what the damage of a little picture of that size would be, that I may treat myself with the same, if I can afford it?' Says I, 'I will.' Says he, 'Will you suggest that I should like it to be *one* of those subjects?' Says I, 'I will.'

I am beating my head against the door with grief and frenzy, and I shall continue to do so, until I receive your answer.—Ever heartily yours,

THE MISCONCEIVED ONE.

SHANKLIN, ISLE OF WIGHT, *Monday Night, Sixteenth June, 1849.*

MY DEAR KATE,—I have but a moment. Just got back and post going out. I have taken a most delightful and beautiful house, belonging to

Mrs.  
Charles  
Dickens.



## 236 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

White, at Bonchurch; cool, airy, private bathing, everything delicious. I think it is the prettiest place I ever saw in my life, at home or abroad. Anne may begin to dismantle Devonshire Terrace. I have arranged for carriages, luggage, and everything.

The man with the post-bag is swearing in the passage.

Ever affectionately.

PS.—A waterfall on the grounds, which I have arranged with a carpenter to convert into a perpetual shower-bath.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Monday, Twenty-fifth June, 1849.*

Mr. Mark  
Lemon.

MY DEAR LEMON,—I am very unwilling to deny Charley the pleasure you so kindly offer him. But as it is just the close of the half-year when they are getting together all the half-year's work—and as that day's pleasure would weaken the next day's duty, I think I must be 'more like an ancient Roman than a ——' Sparkler, and that it will be wisest in me to say nothing about it.

Get a clean pocket-handkerchief ready for the close of *Copperfield* No. 3; 'simple and quiet, but very natural and touching.'—*Evening Bore.*

Ever affectionately.

### NEW SONG

TUNE—'Lesbia hath a beaming eye'

1

Lemon is a little hipped,  
And this is Lemon's true position;  
He is not pale, he's not white-lipped,  
Yet wants a little fresh condition.  
Sweeter 'tis to gaze upon  
Old ocean's rising, falling billers,  
Than on the houses every one,  
That form the street called Saint Anne's Willers.  
Oh, my Lemon, round and fat,  
Oh, my bright, my right, my tight 'un,  
Think a little what you're at—  
Don't stay at home, but come to Brighton!

## 2

Lemon has a coat of frieze,  
 But all so seldom Lemon wears it,  
 That it is a prey to fleas,  
 And ev'ry moth that's hungry tears it.  
 Oh, that coat's the coat for me,  
 That braves the railway sparks and breezes,  
 Leaving every engine free  
 To smoke it, till its owner sneezes!  
 Then, my Lemon, round and fat,  
 L., my bright, my right, my tight 'un,  
 Think a little what you're at—  
 On Tuesday first, come down to Brighton!  
 T. SPARKLER.

Also signed,  
 CATHERINE DICKENS,  
 ANNIE LEECH,  
 GEORGINA HOGARTH,  
 MARY DICKENS,  
 KATIE DICKENS,  
 JOHN LEECH.

WINTERBOURNE, *Sunday Evening, Twenty-third September, 1849.*

MY DEAR WHITE,—I have a hundred times at Rev. James White.  
 least wanted to say to you how good I thought  
 those papers in *Blackwood*—how excellent their purpose, and  
 how delicately and charmingly worked out. Their subtle and  
 delightful humour, and their grasp of the whole question,  
 were something more pleasant to me than I can possibly ex-  
 press.

‘How comes this lumbering Inimitable to say this, on this  
 Sunday night of all nights in the year?’ you naturally ask.  
 Now hear the Inimitable’s honest avowal! I make so bold  
 because I heard that Morning Service better read this morn-  
 ing than ever I have heard it read in my life. And because—  
 for the soul of me—I cannot separate the two things, or help  
 identifying the wise and genial man out of church with the  
 earnest and unaffected man in it. Midsummer madness, per-  
 haps, but a madness I hope that will hold us true friends for  
 many and many a year to come. The madness is over as



soon as you have burned this letter (see the history of the Gunpowder Plot), but let us be friends much longer for these reasons and many included in them not herein expressed.

Affectionately always.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Tuesday, Thirteenth November, 1849.*

The Editor  
of the  
Times.

SIR,—I was a witness of the execution at Horse-monger Lane this morning. I went there with the intention of observing the crowd gathered to behold it, and I had excellent opportunities of doing so, at intervals all through the night, and continuously from day-break until after the spectacle was over. I do not address you on the subject with any intention of discussing the abstract question of capital punishment, or any of the arguments of its opponents or advocates. I simply wish to turn this dreadful experience to some account for the general good, by taking the readiest and most public means of adverting to an intimation given by Sir G. Grey in the last session of Parliament, that the Government might be induced to give its support to a measure making the infliction of capital punishment a private solemnity within the prison walls (with such guarantees for the last sentence of the law being inexorably and surely administered as should be satisfactory to the public at large), and of most earnestly beseeching Sir G. Grey, as a solemn duty which he owes to society, and a responsibility which he cannot for ever put away, to originate such a legislative change himself. I believe that a sight so inconceivably awful as the wickedness and levity of the immense crowd collected at that execution this morning could be imagined by no man, and could be presented in no heathen land under the sun. The horrors of the gibbet and of the crime which brought the wretched murderers to it faded in my mind before the atrocious bearing, looks, and language of the assembled spectators. When I came upon the scene at midnight, the *shrillness* of the cries and howls that were raised from time to time, denoting that they came from a concourse of boys and girls already assembled in the best places, made my blood run cold. As the night went on, screeching, and laughing, and yelling in strong chorus of parodies on negro melo-

dies, with substitutions of 'Mrs. Manning' for 'Susannah,' and the like, were added to these. When the day dawned, thieves, low prostitutes, ruffians, and vagabonds of every kind, flocked on to the ground, with every variety of offensive and foul behaviour. Fightings, faintings, whistlings, imitations of Punch, brutal jokes, tumultuous demonstrations of indecent delight when swooning women were dragged out of the crowd by the police, with their dresses disordered, gave a new zest to the general entertainment. When the sun rose brightly—as it did—it gilded thousands upon thousands of upturned faces, so inexpressibly odious in their brutal mirth or callousness, that a man had cause to feel ashamed of the shape he wore, and to shrink from himself, as fashioned in the image of the Devil. When the two miserable creatures who attracted all this ghastly sight about them were turned quivering into the air, there was no more emotion, no more pity, no more thought that two immortal souls had gone to judgment, no more restraint in any of the previous obscenities, than if the name of Christ had never been heard in this world, and there were no belief among men but that they perished like the beasts.

I have seen, habitually, some of the worst sources of general contamination and corruption in this country, and I think there are not many phases of London life that could surprise me. I am solemnly convinced that nothing that ingenuity could devise to be done in this city, in the same compass of time, could work such ruin as one public execution, and I stand astounded and appalled by the wickedness it exhibits. I do not believe that any community can prosper where such a scene of horror and demoralisation as was enacted this morning outside Horsemonger Lane Gaol is presented at the very doors of good citizens, and is passed by unknown or forgotten. And when in our prayers and thanksgivings for the season we are humbly expressing before God our desire to remove the moral evils of the land, I would ask your readers to consider whether it is not a time to think of this one, and to root it out.

I am, Sir, your faithful Servant.



DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Saturday, Seventeenth November, 1849.*

The Editor  
of the  
Times.

SIR,—When I wrote to you on Tuesday last I had no intention of troubling you again; but as one of your correspondents has to-day expressed a reasonable desire that I would explain myself more clearly, and as I hope I may do no injury to the cause I would serve by stating my views upon it a little more in detail, I shall be glad to do so if you will allow me the opportunity.

My positions in reference to the demoralising nature of public executions are:

First, that they chiefly attract as spectators the lowest, the most depraved, the most abandoned of mankind, in whom they inspire no wholesome emotions whatever.

Second, that the public infliction of a violent death is not a salutary spectacle for any class of people; but that it is in the nature of things that on the class by whom it is generally witnessed it should have a debasing and hardening influence.

On the first head I must appeal again to my own experience of the execution of last Tuesday morning; to all the evidence that has ever been taken upon the subject, showing that executions have been the favourite sight of convicts of all descriptions; to the knowledge possessed by the magistracy and police of the general character of such crowds; to the police reports that are sure to follow their assemblage; to the unvarying description of them given in the newspapers; to the indisputable fact that no decent father is willing that his son, and no decent master is willing that his apprentices or servants, should mingle in them; to the indisputable fact that all society, its dregs excepted, recoil from them as masses of abomination and brutality. That there were not more robberies committed at this last execution was not the fault of the assembled thieves, whose numbers on the occasion the Home Secretary may easily learn from the commissioners in Scotland Yard, but the merit of the police, whose vigilance was beyond all praise.

On the second head, after a passing allusion to the hardening influence which familiarity, even with natural death, produces on coarse minds, I must again refer to my own experience. Nothing would have been a greater comfort to

me—nothing would have so much relieved in my mind the unspeakable terrors of the scene, as to have been enabled to believe that any portion of the immense crowd—that any grains of sand in the vast moral desert stretching away on every side—were moved to any sentiments of fear, repentance, pity, or natural horror by what they saw upon the drop. It was impossible to look around and rest in any such belief. With every consideration and respect for your suggestion that the concourse may have been belying their mental struggles by frantic exaggerations, I am confident that if you had been there beside me, seeing what I saw, and hearing what I heard, you could never have admitted the thought. Such a state of mind has its signs and tokens equally with any other, and no such signs and tokens were there. The mirth was not hysterical, the shoutings and fightings were not the efforts of a strained excitement seeking to vent itself in any relief. The whole was unmistakably callous and bad, as the ferocious woman who was charged on the same day with threatening to murder another in the midst of the multitude, proclaiming that she had a knife about her, and would have her heart's blood, and be hanged on the same gibbet with her namesake, Mrs. Manning, whose death she had come to see—as she had her evil passions excited to the utmost by the scene, so had all the crowd. I believe this was the whole and sole effect of what they had come to see, and I hold that no human being, not being the better for such a sight, could go away without being the worse for it.

To prevent such frightful spectacles in a Christian country, and all the incalculable evils they engender, I would have the last sentence of the law executed with comparative privacy within the prison walls. Before I state how, let me strengthen this proposal with some words of Fielding on this subject, to whose profound knowledge of human nature you, I know, will render full justice:

“The execution should be in some degree private. And here the poets will again assist us. Foreigners have found fault with the cruelty of the English drama, in representing frequent murders upon the stage. In fact, this is not only cruel, but highly injudicious: a murder behind the scenes, if



the poet knows how to manage it, will affect the audience with greater terror than if it was acted before their eyes. Of this we have an instance in the murder of the King in *Macbeth*. Terror hath, I believe, been carried higher by this single instance than by all the blood which hath been split upon the stage. To the poets I may add the priests, whose politics have never been doubted. Those of Egypt in particular, where the sacred mysteries were first devised, well knew the use of hiding from the eyes of the vulgar what they intended should inspire them with the greatest awe and dread. The mind of man is so much more capable of magnifying than his eye, that I question whether every object is not lessened by being looked upon; and this more especially when the passions are concerned; for those are ever apt to fancy much more satisfaction in those objects which they affect, and much more of mischief in those which they abhor, than are really to be found in either. If executions, therefore, were so contrived that few could be present at them, they would be much more shocking and terrible to the crowd without doors than at present, as well as much more dreadful to the criminals themselves.'

From the moment of a murderer's being sentenced to death, I would dismiss him to the dread obscurity to which the wisest judge upon the bench consigned the murderer Rush. I would allow no curious visitors to hold any communication with him; I would place every obstacle in the way of his sayings and doings being served up in print on Sunday mornings for the perusal of families. His execution within the walls of the prison should be conducted with every terrible solemnity that careful consideration could devise. Mr. Calcraft, the hangman (of whom I have some information in reference to this last occasion), should be restrained in his unseemly briskness, in his jokes, his oaths, and his brandy. To attend the execution I would summon a jury of twenty-four, to be called the witness jury, eight to be summoned on a low qualification, eight on a higher, eight on a higher still! so that it might fairly represent all classes of society. There should be present,

likewise, the governor of the gaol, the chaplain, the surgeon, and other officers, the sheriff of the county or city, and two inspectors of prisons. All these should sign a grave and solemn form of certificate (the same in every case) that on such a day, at such an hour, in such a gaol, for such a crime, such a murderer was hanged in their sight. There should be another certificate from the officers of the prison that the person hanged was that person, and no other; a third, that that person was buried. These should be posted on the prison-gate for twenty-one days, printed in the *Gazette*, and exhibited in other public places; and during the hour of the body's hanging I would have the bells of all the churches in that town or city tolled, and all the shops shut up, that all might be reminded of what was being done.

I submit to you that, with the law so changed, the public would (as is right) know much more of the infliction of this tremendous punishment than they know of the infliction of any other. There are not many common subjects, I think, of which they know less than transportation; and yet they never doubt that when a man is ordered to be sent abroad he goes abroad. The details of the commonest prison in London are unknown to the public at large, but they are quite satisfied that prisoners said to be in this or that gaol are really there and really undergo its discipline. The 'mystery' of private execution is objected to; but has not mystery been the character of every improvement in convict treatment and prison discipline effected within the last twenty years? From the police van to Norfolk Island, are not all the changes, changes that make the treatment of the prisoner mysterious? His seclusion in his conveyance hither and thither from the public sight, instead of his being walked through the streets, strung with twenty more to a chain, like the galley slaves in *Don Quixote* (as I remember to have seen in my school-days), makes a mystery of him. His being known by a number instead of by a name, and his being under the rigorous discipline of the associated silent system—to say nothing



of the solitary, which I regard as a mistake—is all mysterious. I cannot understand that the mystery of such an execution as I propose would be other than a fitting climax to all these wise regulations, or why, if there be anything in this objection, we should not return to the days when ladies paid visits to highwaymen, drinking their punch in the condemned cells of Newgate; or Ned Ward, the London spy, went upon a certain regular day of the week to Bridewell to see the women whipped.

Another class of objectors I know there are, who, desiring the total abolition of capital punishment, will have nothing less, and who, not doubting the fearful influence of public executions, would have it protracted for an indefinite term, rather than spare the demoralisation they do not dispute, at the risk of losing sight for a while of their final end. But of these I say nothing, considering them, however good and pure in intention, unreasonable, and not to be argued with.

With many thanks to you for your courtesy, and begging most earnestly to assure you that I write in a deep conviction that I incurred a duty when I became a witness of the execution on Tuesday last, from which nothing ought to move me, and which every hour's reflection strengthens,

I am, Sir, your faithful Servant.

ROCKINGHAM CASTLE, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE,  
*Twenty-seventh November, 1849.*

Miss Joll.      Mr. Charles Dickens presents his compliments to Miss Joll. He is, on principle, opposed to capital punishment, but believing that many earnest and sincere people who are favourable to its retention in extreme cases would unite in any temperate effort to abolish the evils of public executions, and that the consequences of public executions are disgraceful and horrible, he has taken the course with which Miss Joll is acquainted as the most hopeful, and as one undoubtedly calculated to benefit society at large.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Friday Night,*  
*Thirtieth November, 1849. A Quarter-past Ten.*

MY DEAR MRS. WATSON,—Plunged in the deepest gloom, I write these few words to let you know that, just now, when the bell was striking ten, I drank to

The Hon.  
Mrs.  
Watson.

H. E. R.!



and to all the rest of Rockingham; as the wine went down my throat, I felt distinctly that it was ‘changing those thoughts to madness.’

On the way here I was a terror to my companions, and I am at present a blight and mildew on my home.

Think of me sometimes, as I shall long think of our glorious dance last night. Give my most affectionate regards to Watson, and my kind remembrances to all who remember me, and believe me,

Ever faithfully yours.

PS.—I am in such an incapable state, that after executing the foregoing usual flourish I swooned, and remained for some time insensible. Ha, ha, ha! Why was I ever restored to consciousness!!!

PPS.—‘Changing’ those thoughts ought to be ‘driving.’ But my recollection is incoherent and my mind wanders.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Saturday, First December, 1849.*

MY DEAR SIR,—I hasten to let you know what took place at Eton to-day. I found that I *did* stand in some sort committed to Mr. Evans, though not so much so but that I could with perfect ease have declined to place Charley in his house if I had desired to do so. I must say, however, that after seeing Mr. Cookesley (a most excellent man in his way) and seeing Mr. Evans, and Mr. Evans’ house, I think I should, under any circumstances, have given the latter the preference as to the domestic part

Mr. Joseph  
C. King.



of Charley's life. I would certainly prefer to try it. I therefore thought it best to propose to have Mr. Cookesley for his tutor, and to place him as a boarder with Mr. Evans. Both gentlemen seemed satisfied with this arrangement, and Dr. Hawtrey expressed his approval of it also.

Mr. Cookesley wishing to know what Charley could do, asked me if I would object to leaving him there for half an hour or so. As Charley appeared not at all afraid of this proposal, I left him then and there. On my return, Mr. Cookesley said, in high and unqualified terms, that he had been thoroughly well grounded and well taught—that he had examined him in Virgil and Herodotus, and that he not only knew what he was about perfectly well, but showed an intelligence in reference to those authors which did his tutor great credit. He really appeared most interested and pleased, and filled me with a grateful feeling towards you, to whom Charley owes so much.

He said there were certain verses in imitation of Horace (I really forget what sort of verses) to which Charley was unaccustomed, and which were a little matter enough in themselves, but were made a great point of at Eton, and could be got up well in a month '*from an Old Etonian*.' For this purpose he would desire Charley to be sent every day to a certain Mr. Hardisty, in Store Street, Bedford Square, to whom he had already (in my absence) prepared a note. Between ourselves, I must not hesitate to tell you plainly that this appeared to me to be a conventional way of bestowing a little patronage. But, of course, I had nothing for it but to say it should be done; upon which, Mr. Cookesley added that he was then certain that Charley, on coming after the Christmas holidays, would be placed at once in 'the remove,' which seemed to surprise Mr. Evans when I afterwards told him of it as a high station.

I will take him to this gentleman on Monday, and arrange for his going there every day; but, if you will not object, I should still like him to remain with you, and to have the advantage of preparing these amazing verses under your eye until the holidays. That Mr. Cookesley

may have his own way thoroughly, I will send Charley to Mr. Hardisty daily until the school at Eton recommences.

Let me impress upon you in the strongest manner, not only that I was inexpressibly delighted myself by the readiness with which Charley went through this ordeal with a stranger, but that I also saw you would have been well pleased and much gratified if you could have seen Mr. Cookesley afterwards. He had evidently not expected such a result, and took it as not at all an ordinary one.

My dear Sir, yours faithfully and obliged.

[*Private*]

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, LONDON, *Twenty-fourth December, 1849.*

MY DEAR SIR,—You will not be offended by my saying that (in common with many other men) I think ‘our London correspondent’ one of the greatest nuisances of this kind, inasmuch as our London correspondent, seldom knowing anything, feels bound to know everything, and becomes in consequence a very reckless gentleman in respect of the truthfulness of his intelligence.

Mr.  
Alexander  
Ireland.

In your paper, sent to me this morning, I see the correspondent mentions one —, and records how I was wont to feast in the house of the said —. As I never was in the man’s house in my life, or within five miles of it that I know of, I beg you will do me the favour to contradict this.

You will be the less surprised by my begging you to set this right, when I tell you that, hearing of his book, and knowing his history, I wrote to New York denouncing him as ‘a forger and a thief’; that he thereupon put the gentleman who published my letter into prison, and that having but one day before the sailing of the last steamer to collect the proofs printed in the accompanying sheet (which are but a small part of the villain’s life), I got them together in short time, and sent them out to justify



## 248 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

the character I gave him. It is not agreeable to me to be supposed to have sat at this amiable person's feasts.

Faithfully yours.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Saturday, Twenty-ninth December, 1849.*

M. De  
Cerjat.

MY DEAR CERJAT,—I received your letter at breakfast-time this morning with a pleasure my eloquence is unable to express and your modesty unable to conceive. It is so delightful to be remembered at this time of the year in your house where we have been so happy, and in dear old Lausanne, that we always hope to see again, that I can't help pushing away the first page of *Copperfield* No. 10, now staring at me with what I may literally call a blank aspect, and plunging energetically into this reply.

What a strange coincidence that is about Blunderstone House! Of all the odd things I have ever heard (and their name is Legion), I think it is the oddest. I went down into that part of the country on the Seventh of January last year, when I was meditating the story, and chose Blunderstone for the sound of its name. I had previously observed much of what you say about the poor girls. In all you suggest with so much feeling about their return to virtue being cruelly cut off, I concur with a sore heart. I have been turning it over in my mind for some time, and hope, in the history of Little Em'ly (who *must* fall—there is no hope for her), to put it before the thoughts of people in a new and pathetic way, and perhaps to do some good. You will be glad to hear, I know, that *Copperfield* is a great success. I think it is better liked than any of my other books.

We had a most delightful time at Watsons' (for both of them we have preserved and strengthened a real affection), and were the gayest of the gay. There was a Miss Boyle staying in the house, who is an excellent amateur actress, and she and I got up some scenes from *The School for Scandal* and from *Nickleby*, with immense success. We played in the old hall, with the audience filled up and running over with servants. The entertainments concluded

with feats of legerdemain (for the performance of which I have a pretty good apparatus, collected at divers times and in divers places), and we then fell to country dances of a most frantic description, and danced all night. We often spoke of you and Mrs. Cerjat and of Haldimand, and wished you were all there. Watson and I have some fifty times 'registered a vow' (like O'Connell) to come to Lausanne together, and have even settled in what month and week. Something or other has always interposed to prevent us; but I hope, please God, most certainly to see it again, when my labours-Copperfieldian shall have terminated.

You have no idea what that hanging of the Mannings really was. The conduct of the people was so indescribably frightful, that I felt for some time afterwards almost as if I were living in a city of devils. I feel, at this hour, as if I never could go near the place again. My letters have made a great to-do, and led to a great agitation of the subject; but I have not a confident belief in any change being made, mainly because the total abolitionists are utterly reckless and dishonest (generally speaking), and would play the deuce with any such proposition in Parliament, unless it were strongly supported by the Government, which it would certainly not be, the Whig motto (in office) being '*laissez aller.*' I think Peel might do it if he came in. Two points have occurred to me as being a good commentary to the objections to my idea. The first is that a most terrific uproar was made when the hanging processions were abolished, and the ceremony shrunk from Tyburn to the prison door. The second is that, at this very time, under the British Government in New South Wales, executions take place *within the prison walls*, with decidedly improved results. (I am waiting to explode this fact on the first man of mark who gives me the opportunity.)

Unlike you, we have had no marriages or giving in marriage here. We might have had, but a certain young lady, whom you know, is hard to please. The children are all well, thank God! Charley is going to Eton the week after next, and has passed a first-rate examination. Kate is quite well, and unites with me and Georgina in love to



you and Mrs. Cerjat and Haldimand, whom I would give a good deal (tell him) to have several hours' contradiction of at his own table. Good heavens, how obstinate we would both be! I see him leaning back in his chair, with his right forefinger out, and saying, 'Good God!' in reply to some proposition of mine, and then laughing.

All in a moment a feeling comes over me, as if you and I have been still talking, smoking cigars outside the inn at Martigny, the piano sounding inside, and Lady Mary Taylor singing. I look into my garden (which is covered with snow) rather dolefully, but take heart again, and look brightly forward to another expedition to the Great St. Bernard, when Mrs. Cerjat and I shall laugh as I fancy I have never laughed since, in one of those one-sided cars; and when we shall again learn from Haldimand, in a little dingy cabaret, at lunch-time, how to secure a door in travelling (do you remember?) by balancing a chair against it on its two hind legs.

I do hope that we may all come together again once more, while there is a head of hair left among us; and in this hope remain, my dear Cerjat,

Your faithful Friend.

1850

#### NARRATIVE

IN the spring of this year Charles Dickens was again at Brighton, from whence he wrote to Mr. Wills, on *Household Words* business. The first number of this journal appeared on the 30th March.

This autumn he succeeded, for the first time, in getting possession of the 'Fort House,' Broadstairs, on which he had always set his affections. He was hard at work on the closing numbers of *David Copperfield* during all the summer and autumn. The family moved to Broadstairs in July, but as a third daughter was born in August, they were not joined by Mrs. Dickens until the end of September. *David Copperfield* was finished in October.

Charles Dickens began his correspondence with Mrs. Gaskell by asking her to contribute to *Household Words*, which she did from the first number, and very frequently afterwards both to *Household Words* and *All the Year Round*.

The letter to Mr. David Roberts, R.A., is one thanking him for a remembrance of his (Mr. Roberts') travels in the East—a picture of a 'Simoom in the Desert,' which was one of Charles Dickens' most highly-prized possessions.

A letter to Mr. Sheridan Knowles contains allusions which we have no means of explaining, but we publish it, as it is characteristic, and addressed to a literary celebrity. Its being inscribed to 'Daddy' Knowles illustrates a habit of Charles Dickens—as does a letter later in this year to Mr. Stone, 'My dear P.'—of giving nicknames to the friends with whom he was on the most affectionate and intimate terms. Mr. Stone—especially included in this category—was the subject of many such names; 'Pump,' or 'Pumpion,' being one by which he was frequently addressed. Charles Dickens did the same thing as regarded himself. In letters to his intimate friends he frequently called himself 'the Inimitable,' in remembrance of a joke dating from the time of *Pickwick*, as to some newspaper notices, speaking of him as 'the Inimitable Boz'; and the name of 'Sparkler,' which will be found in a note (also to Mr. Stone), was another name he often applied to himself.

There were no public amateur theatricals this year; but in November, the greater part of the amateur company played for three nights at Knebworth Park, as the guests of Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton (afterwards Lord Lytton), who entertained all his county neighbours to witness the performances. The play was *Every Man in his Humour*, and farces, varied each night.

This year we have the first letter to Miss Mary Boyle, a cousin of Mrs. Watson, well known as an amateur actress and an accomplished lady. Miss Boyle was to have acted with the amateur company at Knebworth, but was prevented by domestic affliction. Early in the following year there was a private play at Rockingham Castle, when Miss Boyle



acted with Charles Dickens, the play being *Used Up*, in which Mrs. Dickens also acted; and the farce, *Animal Magnetism*, in which Miss Boyle and Miss Hogarth played. The letters to Mrs. Watson in this year refer chiefly to the preparations for the play in her house.

The accident mentioned in the letter addressed to Mr. Henry Bicknell (son-in-law of Mr. David Roberts, R.A., and a much-esteemed friend of Charles Dickens) was one which happened to Mrs. Dickens, while rehearsing at a theatre. She fell through a trap-door, spraining her ankle so badly as to be incapacitated from taking her part in the theatricals at Knebworth.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Third January, 1850.*

Mr. David  
Roberts,  
R.A.

MY DEAR ROBERTS,—I am more obliged to you than I can tell you for the beautiful mark of your friendly remembrance which you have sent me this morning. I shall set it up among my household gods with pride. It gives me the highest gratification, and I beg you to accept my most cordial and sincere thanks. A little bit of the tissue paper was sticking to the surface of the picture, and has slightly marked it. It requires but a touch, as one would dot an 'i' or cross a 't,' to remove the blemish; but as I cannot think of a recollection so full of poetry being touched by any hand but yours, I have told Green the framer, whenever he shall be on his way with it, to call on you by the road. I enclose a note from Mrs. Dickens, which I hope will impress you into a country dance, with which we hope to dismiss Christmas merrily. Ever, my dear Roberts, Faithfully yours.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Third January, 1850.*

Mr. James  
Sheridan  
Knowles.

MY DEAR GOOD KNOWLES,—Many happy New Years to you, and to all who are near and dear to you. Your generous heart unconsciously exaggerates, I am sure, my merit in respect of that most honourable gentleman who has been the occasion of our recent correspondence. I cannot sufficiently admire the dignity of

his conduct, and I really feel indebted to you for giving me the gratification of observing it.

As to that 'cross note,' which, rightly considered, was nothing of the sort, if ever you refer to it again, I'll do—I don't exactly know what, but something perfectly desperate and ferocious. If I have ever thought of it, it has only been to remember with delight how soon we came to a better understanding, and how heartily we confirmed it with a most expressive shake of the hand, one evening down in that mouldy little den of Miss Kelly's.

Heartily and faithfully yours.

'Daddy' Knowles.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Thirty-first January*, 1850.

MY DEAR MRS. GASKELL,—You may perhaps <sup>Mrs.</sup> have seen an announcement in the papers of my <sup>Gaskell.</sup> intention to start a new cheap weekly journal of general literature.

I do not know what your literary vows of temperance or abstinence may be, but as I do honestly know that there is no living English writer whose aid I would desire to enlist in preference to the authoress of *Mary Barton* (a book that most profoundly affected and impressed me), I venture to ask you whether you can give me any hope that you will write a short tale, or any number of tales, for the projected pages.

No writer's name will be used, neither my own nor any other; every paper will be published without any signature, and all will seem to express the general mind and purpose of the journal, which is the raising up of those that are down, and the general improvement of our social condition. I should set a value on your help which your modesty can hardly imagine; and I am perfectly sure that the least result of your reflection or observation in respect of the life around you, would attract attention and do good.

Of course I regard your time as valuable, and consider it so when I ask you if you could devote any of it to this purpose.



If you could and would prefer to speak to me on the subject, I should be very glad indeed to come to Manchester for a few hours and explain anything you might wish to know. My unaffected and great admiration of your book makes me very earnest in all relating to you. Forgive my troubling you for this reason, and believe me ever,

Faithfully yours.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Tuesday, Fifth February, 1850.*

Rev. James  
White.

MY DEAR WHITE,—I have been going to write to you for a long time, but have always had in my mind that you might come here with Lotty any day. As Lotty has come without you, however (witness a tremendous rampaging and ravaging now going on upstairs!), I despatch this note to say that I suppose you have seen the announcement of 'the' new weekly thing, and that if you would ever write anything for it, you would please me better than I can tell you. We hope to do some solid good, and we mean to be as cheery and pleasant as we can. (And, putting our hands in our breeches pockets, we say complacently, that our money is as good as Blackwood's any day in the week.)

Now the murder's out!

Are you never coming to town any more? Must I come to Bonchurch? Am I born (for the eight-and-thirtieth time) next Thursday, at half-past five, and do you mean to say you are *not* coming to dinner? Well, well, I can always go over to Puseyism to spite my friends, and that's some comfort.

Poor dear Jeffrey! I had heard from him but a few days, and the unopened proof of No. 10 was lying on his table when he died. I believe I have lost as affectionate a friend as I ever had, or ever shall have, in this world.

Ever heartily yours, my dear White.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Eighth February, 1850.*

Mr. Charles  
Knight.

MY DEAR KNIGHT,—Let me thank you in the heartiest manner for your most kind and grati-

fying mention of me in your able pamphlet. It gives me great pleasure, and I sincerely feel it.

I quite agree with you in all you say so well of the injustice and impolicy of this excessive taxation.<sup>1</sup> But when I think of the condition of the great mass of the people, I fear that I could hardly find the heart to press for justice in this respect, before the window-duty is removed. They cannot read without light. They cannot have an average chance of life and health without it. Much as we feel our wrong, I fear that they feel their wrong more, and that the things just done in this wise must bear a new physical existence.

I never see you, and begin to think we must have another play—say in Cornwall—expressly to bring us together.

Very faithfully yours.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR TITLES OF 'HOUSEHOLD WORDS'

### THE FORGE:

A Weekly Journal,

Conducted by CHARLES DICKENS

'Thus at the glowing Forge of Life our actions must be wrought,

Thus on its sounding anvil shaped

Each burning deed and thought.'—*Longfellow*.

THE HEARTH.

THE FORGE.

THE CRUCIBLE.

THE ANVIL OF THE TIME.

CHARLES DICKENS' OWN.

SEASONABLE LEAVES.

EVERGREEN LEAVES.

HOME.

HOME-MUSIC.

CHANGE.

TIME AND TIDE.

TWOPENCE.

ENGLISH BELLS.

WEEKLY BELLS.

THE ROCKET.

GOOD HUMOUR.

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<sup>1</sup> The duty on paper—since abolished.



## 256 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

148 KING'S ROAD, BRIGHTON, *Tuesday Night, Twelfth March, 1850.*

Mr. W. H.  
Wills.

MY DEAR WILLS,—I have made a correction or two in my part of the post-office article. I still observe the top-heavy *Household Words* in the title. The title of 'The Amusements of the People' has to be altered as I have marked it. I would as soon have my hair cut off as an intolerable Scotch shortness put into my titles by the elision of little words. *The Seasons* wants a little punctuation. Will the 'Incident in the Life of Mademoiselle Clairon' go into those two pages? I fear not, but one article would be infinitely better, I am quite certain, than two or three short ones. If it will go in, in with it.

I shall be back, please God, by dinner-time to-morrow week. I will be ready for Smithfield either on the following Monday morning at four, or any other morning you may arrange for.

Would it do to make up No. 2 on Wednesday, the twentieth, instead of Saturday? If so, it would be an immense convenience to me. But if it be distinctly necessary to make it up on Saturday, say by return, and I am to be relied upon. Don't fail in this.

I really *can't* promise to be comic. Indeed, your note put me out a little, for I had just sat down to begin, 'It will last my time.' I will shake my head a little, and see if I can shake a more comic substitute out of it.

As to *two* comic articles, or two any sort of articles, out of me, that is the intensest extreme of no-goism.

Ever faithfully.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Monday, Fourth June, 1850.*

Mr. Frank  
Stone.

MY DEAR STONE,—Leech and Sparkler having promised their ladies to take them to Ascot, and having failed in their truths, propoged to take them to Greenwich instead, next Wednesday. Will that alteration in the usual arrangements be agreeable to Gaffin, S.? If so, the place of meeting is the Sparkler's Bower, and the hour, one exactly.

Ever yours.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Tuesday Evening, Eleventh June, 1850.*

MY DEAR MACREADY,—In next week, either Mr. W. C. Macready. Monday, Thursday, or Friday will suit us perfectly, and we shall be most heartily happy to talk over those trips that we mean to take into Devonshire. We don't at all take to the idea of your going away, and can't, as our American friends say, 'realise' it. I shall forswear that side of the park ever after your departure.

Between *Copperfield* and *Household Words* I am as busy as a bee. I hope to go down to that old image of Eternity that I love so much, and finish the former to its hoarse music. May it be as good a book as I hope it will be, for your children's children's children to read.

With most affectionate loves, ever, my dear Friend,

Yours most sincerely.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Thirteenth July, 1850.*

MY DEAR WHITE,—Being obliged (sorely Rev. James White. against my will) to leave my work this morning and go out, and having a few spare minutes before I go, I write a hasty note, to hint how glad I am to have received yours, and how happy and tranquil we feel it to be for you all, that the end of that long illness has come.<sup>1</sup> Kate and Georgy send best loves to Mrs. White, and we hope she will take all needful rest and relief after those arduous, sad, and weary weeks. I have taken a house at Broadstairs, from early in August until the end of October, as I don't want to come back to London until I shall have finished *Copperfield*. I am rejoiced at the idea of your going there. You will find it the healthiest and freshest of places; and there are Canterbury, and all varieties of what Leigh Hunt calls 'greenery,' within a few minutes' railroad ride. It is not very picturesque ashore, but extremely so seaward; all manner of ships continually passing close inshore. So come, and we'll have no end of sports, please God.

I am glad to say, as I know you will be to hear, that there seems a bright unanimity about *Copperfield*. I am very much

<sup>1</sup> The last illness of Mrs. White's mother.



interested in it and pleased with it myself. I have carefully planned out the story, for some time past, to the end, and am making out my purposes with great care. I should like to know what you see from that tower of yours. I have little doubt you see the real objects in the prospect.

*Household Words* goes on *thoroughly well*. It is expensive, of course, and demands a large circulation; but it is taking a great and steady stand, and I have no doubt already yields a good round profit.

To-morrow week I shall expect you. You shall have a bottle of the 'Twenty.' I have kept a few last lingering caskets with the gem enshrined therein, expressly for you.—  
Ever, my dear White, Cordially yours.

HÔTEL WINDSOR, PARIS, *Thursday,*  
*Twenty-seventh July, 1850. After post-time.*

Mr. W. H.  
Wills.

MY DEAR WILLS,—I have had much ado to get to work; the heat here being so intense that I can do nothing but lie on the bare floor all day. I never felt it anything like so hot in Italy.

There is nothing doing in the theatres, and the atmosphere is so horribly oppressive there that one can hardly endure it. I came out of the Français last night half dead. I am writing at this moment with nothing on but a shirt and pair of white trousers, and have been sitting four hours at this paper, but am as faint with the heat as if I had been at some tremendous gymnastics; and yet we had a thunderstorm last night.

I hope we are doing pretty well in Wellington Street. My anxiety makes me feel as if I had been away a year. I hope to be home on Tuesday evening, or night at latest. I have picked up a very curious book of French statistics that will suit us, and an odd proposal for a company connected with the gambling in California, of which you will also be able to make something.

I saw a certain 'Lord Spleen' mentioned in a playbill yesterday, and will look after that distinguished English nobleman to-night, if possible. Rachel played last night for the


last time before going to London, and has not so much in her as some of our friends suppose.

The English people are perpetually squeezing themselves into courtyards, blind alleys, closed edifices, and other places where they have no sort of business. The French people, as usual, are making as much noise as possible about everything that is of no importance, but seem (as far as one can judge) pretty quiet and good-humoured. They made a mighty hullo at the theatre last night, when Brutus (the play was *Lucretia*) declaimed about liberty. Ever faithfully.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Ninth August, 1850.*

MY DEAR WILLS,—I shall be obliged to you if you will write to this man, and tell him that what he asks I never do—firstly, because I have no kind of connection with any manager or theatre; secondly, because I am asked to read so many manuscripts, that compliance is impossible, or I should have no other occupation or relaxation in the world.

Mr. W. H.  
Wills.

 A foreign gentleman, with a beard, name unknown, but signing himself 'A Fellow Man,' and dating from nowhere, declined, twice yesterday, to leave this house for any less consideration than the insignificant one of 'twenty pounds.' I have had a policeman waiting for him all day.

Faithfully yours.

BROADSTAIRS, *Tuesday, Third September, 1850.*

MY DEAREST KATE,—I enclose a few lines from Georgy, and write these to say that I purpose going home at some time on Thursday, but I cannot say precisely when, as it depends on what work I do tomorrow. Yesterday Charles Knight, White, Forster, Charley, and I walked to Richborough Castle and back. Knight dined with us afterwards; and the Whites, the Bicknells, and Mrs. Gibson came in in the evening and played vingt-et-un.

Mrs.  
Charles  
Dickens.

Having no news I must tell you a story of Sydney. The children, Georgy, and I were out in the garden on Sunday evening (by the bye, I made a beautiful passage down, and



got to Margate a few minutes after one), when I asked Sydney if he would go to the railroad and see if Forster was coming. As he answered very boldly 'Yes,' I opened the garden gate, upon which he set off alone as fast as his legs would carry him; and being pursued, was not overtaken until he was through the Lawn House Archway, when he was still going on at full speed—I can't conceive where. Being brought back in triumph, he made a number of fictitious starts, for the sake of being overtaken again, and we made a regular game of it. At last, when he and Ally had run away, instead of running after them, we came into the garden, shut the gate, and crouched down on the ground. Presently we heard them come back and say to each other with some alarm, 'Why, the gate's shut, and they're all gone!' Ally began in a dismayed way to cry out, but the Phenomenon shouting, 'Open the gate!' sent an enormous stone flying into the garden (among our heads) by way of alarming the establishment. I thought it a wonderful piece of character, showing great readiness of resource. He would have fired a perfect battery of stones, or very likely have broken the pantry window, I think, if we hadn't let him in.

They are all in great force, and send their loves. They are all much excited with the expectation of receiving you on Friday, and would start me off to fetch you now if I would go.—Ever, my dearest Kate,

Most affectionately.

BROADSTAIRS, KENT, *Tuesday, Third September, 1850.*

Sir Edward  
Bulwer  
Lytton.

Sir Edward  
Bulwer  
Lytton.

MY DEAR SIR EDWARD,—I have had the long-contemplated talk with Forster about the play, and write to assure you that I shall be delighted to come down to Knebworth and do Bobadil, or anything else, provided it would suit your convenience to hold the great dramatic festival in the last week of October. The concluding number of *Copperfield* will prevent me from leaving here until Saturday, the twenty-sixth of that month. If I were at my own disposal, I hope I need not say I should be at yours.

Forster will tell you with what men we must do the play, and what laurels we would propose to leave for the gathering

of new aspirants; of whom I hope you have a reasonable stock in your part of the country.

Do you know Mary Boyle—daughter of the old Admiral? because she is the very best actress I ever saw off the stage, and immeasurably better than a great many I have seen on it. I have acted with her in a country house in Northamptonshire, and am going to do so again next November. If you know her, I think she would be more than pleased to play, and by giving her something good in a farce we could get her to do Mrs. Kitley. In that case my little sister-in-law would 'go on' for the second lady, and you could do without actresses, besides giving the thing a particular grace and interest.

If we could get Mary Boyle, we would do *Used Up*, which is a delightful piece, as the farce. But maybe you know nothing about the said Mary, and in that case I should like to know what you would think of doing.

You gratify me more than I can tell you by what you say about *Copperfield*, the more so as I hope myself that some heretofore-deficient qualities are there. You are not likely to misunderstand me when I say that I like it very much, and am deeply interested in it, and that I have kept and am keeping my mind very steadily upon it.—Believe me always,

Very faithfully yours.

BROADSTAIRS, KENT, *Monday Night, Sixteenth September, 1850.*

MY DEAR MISS BOYLE,—Your letter having arrived in time for me to write a line by the evening post, I came out of a paroxysm of *Copperfield*, to say that I am *perfectly delighted* to read it, and to know that we are going to act together in that merry party. We dress *Every Man* in Queen Elizabeth's time. The acting copy is much altered from the old play, but we still smooth down phrases when needful. I don't remember any one that is changed. Georgina says she can't describe the dress Mrs. Kitley used to wear. I shall be in town on Saturday, and will then get Maclise to make me a little sketch of it, carefully explained, which I will post to you. At the same time I will send you the book. After consideration of farces, it has occurred to

Miss Mary Boyle.



me (old Ben being, I daresay, 'rare'; but I *do* know rather heavy here and there) that Mrs. Inchbald's *Animal Magnetism*, which we have often played, will 'go' with a greater laugh than anything else. That book I will send you on Saturday too. You will find your part (Lisette, I think it is called, but it is a waiting-maid) a most admirable one; and I have seen people laugh at the piece until they have hung over the front of the boxes like ripe fruit. You may dress the part to please yourself after reading it. We wear powder. I will take care (bringing a theatrical hair-dresser for the company) of your wig! We will rehearse the two pieces when we go down, or at least anything with which you have to do, over and over again. You will find my company so well used to it, and so accustomed to consider it a grave matter of business, as to make it easy. I am now awaiting the French books with a view to Rockingham, and I hope to report of that too, when I write to you on Saturday.

My dear Miss Boyle, very faithfully yours.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Friday, Twentieth September, 1850.*

Miss Mary  
Boyle.

MY DEAR MISS BOYLE,—I enclose you the book of *Animal Magnetism*, and the book of *Every Man in his Humour*; also a sketch by Mr. Maclise of a correct and picturesque Mrs. Kitley. Mr. Forster is Kitley; Mr. Lemon, Brainworm; Mr. Leech, Master Matthew; Mr. Jerrold, Master Stephen; Mr. Stone, Downright. Kitley's dress is a very plain purple gown, like a Bluecoat-boy's. Downright's dress is also very sober, chiefly brown and gray. All the rest of us are very bright. I am flaming red. Georgina will write you about your colour and hers in *Animal Magnetism*; the gayer the better. I am the Doctor, in black, with red stockings. Mr. Lemon (an excellent actor), the valet, as far as I can remember, in blue and yellow, and a chintz waistcoat. Mr. Leech is the Marquis, and Mr. Egg the one-eyed servant.

What do you think of doing *Animal Magnetism* as the last piece (we may play three in all, I think) at Rockingham? If so, we might make Quin the one-eyed servant, and beat up with Mrs. Watson for a Marquis. Will you tell me what

you think of this, addressed to Broadstairs? I have not heard from Bulwer again. I daresay I have crossed a letter from him by coming up to-day; but I have every reason to believe that the last week in October is the time.

Ever very faithfully yours.

PS.—This is quite a managerial letter, which I write with all manner of appointments and business discussions going on about me, having my pen on the paper and my eye on *Household Words*, my head on *Copperfield* and my ear nowhere particularly.

BROADSTAIRS, KENT, *Twenty-fourth September, 1850.*

MY DEAR MRS. WATSON,—Coming out of *Copperfield* into a condition of temporary and partial consciousness, I plunge into histrionic duties, and hold enormous correspondence with Miss Boyle, between whom and myself the most portentous packets are continually passing. I send you a piece we purpose playing last at Rockingham, which ‘my company’ played in London, Scotland, Manchester, Liverpool, and I don’t know where else. It is one of the most ridiculous things ever done. We purpose, as I have said, playing it last. Why do I send it to you? Because there is an excellent part (played in my troupe by George Cruikshank) for your brother in it—Jeffrey; with a black patch on his eye, and a lame leg, he would be charming—noble! If he is come home, give him my love and tell him so. If he is not come home, do me that favour when he does come. And add that I have a wig for him belonging to the part, which I have an idea of sending to the Exposition of ’51, as a triumph of human ingenuity.

The Hon.  
Mrs.  
Watson.

I am the Doctor; Miss Boyle, Lisette; Georgy, the other little woman. We have nearly arranged our ‘bill’ for Rockingham. We shall want one more reasonably good actor, besides your brother and Miss Boyle’s, to play the Marquis in this piece. Do you know a being endowed by nature with the requisite qualities?

There are some things in the next *Copperfield* that I think better than any that have gone before. After I have been



believing such things with all my heart and soul, two results always ensue: first, I can't write plainly to the eye; secondly, I can't write sensibly to the mind. So *Copperfield* is to blame, and I am not, for this wandering note; and if you like it, you'll forgive me.—Ever, my dear Mrs. Watson,

Very faithfully yours.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Wednesday, Thirtieth October, 1850.*

Miss Mary  
Boyle.

MY DEAR MISS BOYLE,—We are all extremely concerned and distressed to lose you. But we feel that it cannot be otherwise, and we do not, in our own expectation of amusement, forget the sad cause of your absence.

Bulwer was here yesterday; and if I were to tell you how earnestly he and all the other friends whom you don't know have looked forward to the projected association with you, and in what a friendly spirit they all express their disappointment, you would be quite moved by it, I think. Pray don't give yourself the least uneasiness on account of the blank in our arrangements. I did not write to you yesterday, in the hope that I might be able to tell you to-day that I had replaced you, in however poor a way. I cannot do that yet, but I am busily making out some means of filling the parts before we rehearse to-morrow night, and I trust to be able to do so in some out-of-the-way manner.

Mrs. Dickens and Bridget are bitterly disappointed at not seeing you to-day, but we all hope for a better time.—Dear Miss Boyle,

Faithfully yours always.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Sunday Night, Third November, 1850.*

Sir Edward  
Bulwer  
Lytton.

MY DEAR BULWER LYTTON,—I should have waited at home to-day on the chance of your calling, but that I went over to look after Lemon; and I went for this reason: the surgeon opines that there is no possibility of Mrs. Dickens being able to play, although she is going on 'as well as possible,' which I sincerely believe.

Now, *when* the accident happened, Mrs. Lemon told my little sister-in-law that she would gladly undertake the part if it should become necessary. Going after her to-day, I

found that she and Lemon had gone out of town, but will be back to-night. I have written to her, earnestly urging her to the redemption of her offer. I have no doubt of being able to see her well up in the characters; and I hope you approve of this remedy. If she once screws her courage to the sticking place, I have no fear of her whatever. This is what I would say to you. If I don't see you here, I will write to you at Forster's, reporting progress. Don't be discouraged, for I am full of confidence, and resolve to do the utmost that is in me—and I well know they all will—to make the nights at Knebworth *triumphant*. Once in a thing like this—once in everything, to my thinking—it must be carried out like a mighty enterprise, heart and soul.

Pray regard me as wholly at the disposal of the theatricals, until they shall be gloriously achieved.

My unfortunate other half (lying in bed) is very anxious that I should let you know that she means to break her heart if she should be prevented from coming as one of the audience, and that she has been devising means all day of being brought down in the brougham with her foot upon a T.

Ever faithfully yours.

OFFICE OF 'HOUSEHOLD WORDS,'

Wednesday Evening, Thirteenth November, 1850.

MY DEAR BULWER LYTTON,—On the principle of postponing nothing connected with the great scheme, I have been to Ollivier's, where I found our friend the Choremusicon in a very shattered state—his mouth wide open—the greater part of his teeth out—his bowels disclosed to the public eye—and his whole system frightfully disordered. In this condition he is speechless. I cannot, therefore, report touching his eloquence, but I find he is a piano as well as a Choremusicon—that he requires to pass through no intermediate stage between Choremusicon and piano, and therefore that he can easily and certainly accompany songs.

Sir Edward  
Bulwer  
Lytton.

Now, will you have it? I am inclined to believe that on the whole, it is the best thing.



I have not heard of anything else having happened to anybody.

If I should not find you gone to Australia or elsewhere, and should not have occasion to advertise in the third column of the *Times*, I shall hope not to add to your misfortunes—I dare not say to afford you consolation—by shaking hands with you to-morrow night, and afterwards keeping every man connected with the theatrical department to his duty.

Ever faithfully yours.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Saturday Evening,*  
*Twenty-third November, 1850.*

The Hon.  
Mrs.  
Watson.

MY DEAR MRS. WATSON,—Being well home from Knebworth, where everything has gone off in a whirl of triumph and fired the whole length and breadth of the county of Hertfordshire, I write a short note to say that we are yours any time after Twelfth-night, and that we look forward to seeing you with the greatest pleasure. I should have made this reply to your last note sooner, but that I have been waiting to send you *Copperfield* in a new waistcoat. His tailor is so slow that it has not yet appeared; but when the resplendent garment comes home it shall be forwarded.

I have not your note at hand, but I think you said ‘any time after Christmas.’ At all events, and whatever you said, we will conclude a treaty on any terms you may propose. And if it should include any of Charley’s holidays, perhaps you would allow us to put a brass collar round his neck, and chain him up in the stable.

Kate and Georgina (who has covered herself with glory) join me in best remembrances and regards to Watson and you and all the house. I have stupendous proposals to make concerning Switzerland in the spring.—My dear Mrs. Watson,

Ever faithfully yours.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Twenty-eighth November, 1850.*

Mr. Henry  
Bicknell.

MY DEAR MR. BICKNELL,—If I ever did such a thing, believe me I would do it at your request. But I don’t, and if you could see the ramparts of letters from

similar institutions, with which my desk bristles every now and then, you would feel that nothing lies between total abstinence (in this regard) and utter bewilderment and lecturation.

Mrs. Dickens and her sister unite with me in kind regards to you and Mrs. Bicknell. The consequences of the accident are fast fading, I am happy to say. We all hope to hear shortly that Mrs. Bicknell has recovered that other little accident, which (as you and I know) will occasionally happen in well-regulated families.

Very faithfully yours.

OFFICE OF 'HOUSEHOLD WORDS,'  
Wednesday, Fourth December, 1850.

MY DEAR LANDOR,—I have been (a strange thing for me) so very unwell since Sunday, that I have hardly been able to hold up my head. This, my dear friend, is the reason why I have not sooner written to you in reference to your noble letter, which I read in the *Examiner*, and for which—as it exalts me—I cannot, cannot thank you in words.

Mr. Walter  
Savage  
Landor.

We had been following up the blow in Kinkel's<sup>1</sup> favour, and I was growing sanguine, in the hope of getting him out (having enlisted strong and active sympathy in his behalf), when the news came of his escape. Since then we have heard nothing of him. I rather incline to the opinion that the damnable powers that be connived at his escape, but know nothing. Whether he be retaken or whether he appear (as I am not without hope he may) in the streets of London, I shall be a party to no step whatever without consulting you; and if any scrap of intelligence concerning him shall reach me, it shall be yours immediately.

Horne<sup>2</sup> wrote the article. I shall see him here to-night, and know how he will feel your sympathy and support. But

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Gottfried Kinkel, a distinguished scholar and Professor in the University of Bonn, who was at that time undergoing very rigorous State imprisonment in Prussia, for political reasons. Dr. Kinkel was afterwards well known as a teacher and lecturer on Art in London, where he resided for many years.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. R. H. Horne, the author of *Orion*.



## 268 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

I do not wait to see him before writing, lest you should think me slow to feel your generosity. We said at home, when we read your letter, that it was like the opening of your whole munificent and bare heart.—Ever most affectionately yours,  
My dear Landor.



THIS IS No. 2.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Monday Morning, Ninth December, 1850.*

The Hon.  
Mrs.  
Watson. MY DEAR MRS. WATSON,—Your note to me of Saturday has crossed mine to you, I find. If you open both of mine together, please to observe *this is No. 2.*

You may rely on Mr. Tucker's doing his work thoroughly well and charging a fair price. It is not possible for him to say aforehand, in such a case, what it will cost, I imagine, as he will have to adapt his work to the place. Nathan's stage knowledge may be stated in the following figures: 00000000000. Therefore, I think you had best refer Mr. Tucker to *me*, and I will apply all needful screws and tortures to him.

I have thought of one or two very ingenious (hem!) little contrivances for adapting the difficulties of *Used Up* to the small stage. They will require to be so exactly explained to your carpenter (though very easy little things in themselves), that I think I had better, before Christmas, send my servant down for an hour—he is quite an old stager now—to show him precisely what I mean. It is not a day's work, but it would be extremely difficult to explain in writing. I developed these wonderful ideas to the master carpenter at one of the theatres, and he shook his head with an intensely mournful air, and said, 'Ah, sir, it's a universal observation in the profession, sir, that it was a great loss to the public when you took to writing books!' which I thought complimentary to *Copperfield*.

Ever faithfully yours.

1 DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Saturday, Fourteenth December, 1850.*

MY DEAR MRS. WATSON,—I shall be delighted to come on the seventh instead of the eighth. We consider it an engagement. Over and above the pleasure of a quiet day with you, I think I can greatly facilitate the preparations (that's the way, you see, in which we cheat ourselves into making duties of pleasures) by being at Rockingham a day earlier. So that's settled.

The Hon.  
Mrs.  
Watson.

I was quite certain when that Child of Israel mentioned those dimensions, that he must be wrong. For which wooden-headedness the Child shall be taken to task on Monday morning, when I am going to look at his preparations, by appointment, about the door. Don't you observe, that the scenery not being made expressly for the room, it may be impossible to use it as you propose? There is a scene before that wall, and unless the door in the scene (supposing there to be one, which I am not sure of) should come exactly into the place of the door of the room, the door of the room might as well be in Africa. If it could be used it would still require to be backed (excuse professional technicality) by another scene in the passage. And if it be rather in the side of the bottom of the room (as I seem to remember it), it would be put out of sight, or partially, by the side scenes. Do you comprehend these stage managerial sagacities? That piece of additional room in so small a stage would be of immense service, if we could avail ourselves of it. If we can't, I have another means (I think) of discovering Leech, Saville, and Coldstream at table. I am constantly turning over in my mind the capacities of the place, and hope by one means or other to make something more than the best of it. As to the fireplace, you will never be able to use that. The heat of the lamp will be very great, and ventilation will be the thing wanted. Thirteen feet and a half of depth, diminished by stage fittings and furniture, is a small space. I think the doorway could be used in the last scene, with the castle steps and platform for the staircase running straight through it toward the hall. *Nous verrons.* I will write again about my visit of inspection, probably on Monday.

Will you let them know that Messrs. Nathan, of Tichborne



Street, Haymarket, will dress them, please, and that I will engage for their doing it thoroughly well; also that Mr. Wilson, theatrical hairdresser, Strand, near St. Clement's Churchyard, will come down with wigs, etc., to 'make up' everybody; that he has a list of the pieces from me, and that he will be glad to measure the heads and consult the tastes of all concerned, if they will give him the opportunity beforehand? I should like to see Sir Adonis Leech and the Hon. T. Saville if I can. For they ought to be wonderfully made up, and to be as unlike themselves as possible, and to contrast well with each other and with me. I rather grudge *caro sposo* coming into the company. I should like him so much to see the play. If we do it all well together it ought to be so very pleasant. I never saw a great mass of people so charmed with a little story as when we acted it at the Glasgow Theatre. But I have no other reason for faltering when I take him to my arms. I feel that he is the man for the part.<sup>1</sup> I see him with a blue bag, a flaxen wig, and green spectacles. I know what it will be. I foresee how all that sessional experience will come out. I reconcile myself to it, in spite of the selfish consideration of wanting him elsewhere; and while I have a heavy sense of a light being snuffed out in the audience, perceive a new luminary shining on the stage!

Your brother would make a capital tiger,<sup>2</sup> too! Very short tight surtout, doeskins, bright top-boots, white cravat, bouquet in buttonhole, close wig—very good, ve—ry good. It clearly must be so. The thing is done. I told you we were opening a tremendous correspondence when we first began to write on such a long subject. But do let me tell you, once and for all, that I am in the business heart and soul, and that you cannot trouble me respecting it, and that I wouldn't willingly or knowingly leave the minutest detail unprovided for. It cannot possibly be a success if the smallest peppercorn of arrangement be omitted. And a success it must be! I couldn't go into such a thing, or help to bring you poorly

<sup>1</sup> The part of the lawyer in *Used Up*. It was *not* played by Mr. Watson, but by Mr. (afterwards Sir William) Boxall, R.A., a very old and intimate friend of Mr. and Mrs. Watson, and of Charles Dickens.

<sup>2</sup> This part, finally, was played by Charles Dickens, junior.

out of it, for any earthly consideration. Talking of forgetting, isn't it odd? I doubt if I could forget words I had learned, so long as I wanted them. But the moment the necessity goes, they go. I know my place and everybody's place in this identical piece of *Used Up* perfectly, and could put every little object on its own square inches of room exactly where it ought to be. But I have no more recollection of my words now (I took the book up yesterday) than if I had only seen the play as one of the audience at a theatre. Perhaps not so much.—Ever, dear Mrs. Watson,

Faithfully yours.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Nineteenth December*, 1850.

MY DEAR MRS. WATSON,—I am sorry to say that business (*Household Words* business) will keep me in town to-morrow. But on Monday I propose coming down and returning the same day. The train for my money appears to be the half-past six A. M. (horrible initials!), and to that invention for promoting early rising I design to commit myself.

The Hon.  
Mrs.  
Watson.

I am shocked if I also made the mistake of confounding those two (and too) similar names.<sup>1</sup> But I think Mr. S-T-A-F-F-O-R-D had better do the Marquis. I am glad to find that we agree, but we always do.

I have closely overhauled the little theatre, and the carpenter and painter. The whole has been entirely repainted (I mean the proscenium and scenery) for this especial purpose, and is extremely pretty. I don't think, the scale considered, that anything better *could* be done. It is very elegant. I have brought 'the Child' to this. For the hire of the theatre, fifteen pounds. The carriage to be extra. The Child's fares and expenses (which will be very moderate) to be extra. The stage-carpenter's wages to be extra—seven shillings a day. I don't think, when you see the things, that you will consider this too much. It is as good as the Queen's little theatre at Windsor, raised stage excepted. I have had an extraction made, which will enable us to use the door. I am

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Stafford and Mr. Stopford, who both acted in the plays at Rockingham.



at present breaking my man's heart, by teaching him how to imitate the sounds of the smashing of the windows and the breaking of the balcony in *Used Up*. In the event of his death from grief, I have promised to do something for his mother. Thinking it possible that you might not see the enclosed until next month, and hoping that it is seasonable for Christmas, I send it. Being, with cordial regards and all seasonable good wishes, Ever, dear Mrs. Watson,

Faithfully yours.

PS.—This [blot] is a tear over the devotion of Captain Boyle, who (as I learned from the Child of Israel this morning) would not decide upon Farmer Wurzel's coat, without referring the question of buttons to managerial approval.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Tuesday Night, Christmas Eve, 1850.*

Mr. John  
Poole.

MY DEAR POOLE,—On the Sunday when I last saw you, I went straight to Lord John's with the letter you read. He was out of town, and I left it with my card.

On the following Wednesday I received a note from him, saying that he did not bear in mind exactly what I had told him of you before, and asking me to tell it again. I immediately replied, of course, and gave him an exact description of you and your condition, and your way of life in Paris and everything else; a perfect diorama in little, with you pervading it. To-day I got a letter from him announcing that you have a pension of *a hundred a year!* of which I heartily wish you joy.

He says: 'I am happy to say that the Queen has approved of a pension of one hundred pounds a year to Mr. Poole.'

'The Queen, in her gracious answer, informs me that she meant to have mentioned Mr. Poole to me, and that she had wished to place him in the Charter House, but found the society there was not such that he could associate with.'

'Be so good as to inform Mr. Poole that directions are given for his pension, which will date from the end of June last.'

I have lost no time in answering this, but you must brace

up your energies to write him a short note too, and another for the Queen.

If you are in Paris, shall I ascertain what authority I shall need from you to receive the half-year, which I suppose will be shortly due? I can receive it as usual.

With all good wishes and congratulations, seasonable and unseasonable,  
 Always faithfully yours.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, Monday Morning, Thirtieth December, 1850.

MY DEAR MRS. WATSON,—As your letter is *decided*, the scaffolding shall be re-erected round Charley's boots (it has been taken down, and the workmen had retired to their respective homes in various parts of England and Wales) and his dressing proceeded with. I have been very much pleased with him in the matter, as he never made the least demonstration of disappointment and mortification, and was perfectly contented to give in. (*Here I break off to go to Boxall.*) (*Here I return much exhausted.*)

The Hon.  
 Mrs.  
 Watson.

Your time shall be stated in the bills for both nights. I propose to rehearse on the day, on Thursday and Friday, and in the evening on Saturday, that we may try our lights. Therefore:

NATHAN  
 and  
 STAGE CARPENTER

{ will come on Tuesday, Seventh January, as there must be a responsible person to anathematise, and as the company seems so slow about their dresses, that I foresee the strong probability of Nathan having a good deal to do at Rockingham in that respect.

WILSON . . . . will come on Saturday, Eleventh January.  
 TUCKER . . . . will come on Saturday, Eleventh January.

I shall be delighted to see your brother, and so no more at present from  
 Yours ever,

COLDSTREAM FREELOVE DOCTOR DICKENS.

PS.—As Boxall (with his head very much on one side and his spectacles on) danced backward from the canvas incessantly with great nimbleness, and returned, and made



little digs at it with his pencil, with a horrible grin on his countenance, I augur that he pleased himself this morning.

‘Tag’ added by Mr. Dickens to *Animal Magnetism*, played at Rockingham Castle.

#### ANIMAL MAGNETISM.—TAG

[After LA FLEUR says to the MARQUIS: ‘Sir, return him the wand; and the ladies, I daresay, will fall in love with him again.’]

DOCTOR.        I’m cheated, robbed! I don’t believe! I hate  
                    Wand, Marquis, Doctor, Ward, Lisette, and Fate!

LA FLEUR.      Not me?

DOCTOR.                      You worse, you rascal, than the rest.

LA FLEUR (*bowing*). To merit it, good sir, I’ve done my best.

LISETTE (*sharply*). And I.

CONSTANCE.                      I fear that I too have a claim  
                    Upon your anger.

LISETTE.                      Anger, madam? Shame!  
                    He’s justly treated, as he might have known.  
                    And if the wand were a divining one  
                    It would have turned, within his very hands,  
                    Point-blank to where your handsome husband stands.

CONSTANCE (*glancing at DOCTOR*). I would it were the wand of  
                    Harlequin,

                    To change his temper and his favour win.

JEFFREY (*peeping in*). In that case, mistress, you might be so  
                    kind

                    As wave me back the eye of which I’m blind.

MARQUIS (*laughing and examining it*). ’Tis nothing but a piece  
                    of senseless wood,

                    And has no influence for harm or good.

                    Yet stay! It surely draws me towards those  
                    Indulgent, pleasant, smiling, beaming rows!  
                    It surely charms me.

ALL.

                    And us too.

MARQUIS

                    To bend

                    Before their gen’rous efforts to commend;

                    To cheer us on, through these few happy hours,

And strew our mimic way with real flowers.

[*All make obeisance.*]

Stay yet again. Among us all, I feel  
 One subtle, all-pervading influence steal,  
 Stirring one wish within one heart and head,  
 Bright be the path our host and hostess tread!  
 Blest be their children, happy be their race,  
 Long may they live, their ancient hall to grace;  
 Long bear of English virtues noble fruit—  
 Green-hearted ROCKINGHAM! strike deep thy root

1851

#### NARRATIVE

IN February this year, Charles Dickens made a short bachelor excursion with Mr. Leech and the Hon. Spencer Lyttelton to Paris, from whence we give a letter to his wife. She was at this time in very bad health, and the little infant Dora had a serious illness during the winter. The child rallied for the time, but Mrs. Dickens continued so ill that she was advised to try the air—and water—of Malvern. And early in March, she and her sister were established in lodgings there, the children being left in London, and Charles Dickens dividing his time between Devonshire Terrace and Malvern. He was busily occupied before this time in superintending the arrangements for Mr. Macready's last appearance on the stage at Drury Lane, and for a great dinner which was given to Mr. Macready after it on the First March, at which the chair was taken by Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton. With him Charles Dickens was then engaged in maturing a scheme, which had been projected at the time of the amateur play at Knebworth, of a Guild of Literature and Art, which was to found a provident fund for literary men and artists; and to start which, a series of dramatic performances by the amateur company was proposed. Sir E. B. Lytton wrote a comedy, *Not so Bad as We Seem*, for the purpose, to be played in London and the provinces; and the Duke of Devonshire turned one



of the splendid rooms in Devonshire House into a theatre, for the first occasion of its performance. It was played early in May before her Majesty and the Prince Consort, and a large audience. Later in the season, there were several representations of the comedy (with a farce, *Mr. Nightingale's Diary*, written by Charles Dickens for himself and Mr. Mark Lemon) in the Hanover Square Rooms.

But in the interval between the Macready banquet and the play at Devonshire House, Charles Dickens underwent great family trouble and sorrow. His father, whose health had been declining for some time, became seriously ill, and Charles Dickens was summoned from Malvern to attend upon him. Mr. John Dickens died on the Thirty-first March. On the Fourteenth April, Charles Dickens had gone from Malvern to preside at the annual dinner of the General Theatrical Fund, and found his children all well at Devonshire Terrace. He was playing with his baby, Dora, before he went to the dinner; soon after he left the house the child died suddenly in her nurse's arms. The sad news was communicated to the father after his duties at the dinner were over. The next day, Mr. Forster went to Malvern to break the news to Mrs. Dickens, and she and her sister returned with him to London, and the Malvern lodgings were given up. But Mrs. Dickens being still out of health, and London being more than usually full (this being the year of the Great Exhibition), Charles Dickens decided to let the town house again for a few months, and engaged the Fort House, Broadstairs, from the beginning of May until November. This, which was his longest sojourn at Broadstairs, was also the last, as the following summer he changed his seaside resort, and never returned to that pretty little watering-place, although he always retained an affectionate interest in it.

The lease of the Devonshire Terrace house was to expire this year. It was now too small for his family, so he could not renew it, although he left it with regret. From the beginning of the year, he had been in negotiation for a house in Tavistock Square, in which his friend Mr. Frank

Stone had lived for some years. Many letters which follow are on the subject of this house and the improvements Charles Dickens made in it. His brother-in-law, Henry Austin—himself an architect—superintended the ‘works,’ at Tavistock House, as he did afterwards those at Gad’s Hill—and there are many characteristic letters to Mr. Austin while these works were in progress. In the autumn, as a letter written in August to Mr. Stone will show, an exchange of houses was made—Mr. Stone removing with his family to Devonshire Terrace until his own new house was ready—while the alterations in Tavistock House went on, and Charles Dickens removed into it from Broadstairs, in November.

His eldest son was now an Eton boy. He had been one of the party and had played a small part in the play at Rockingham Castle, in the Christmas holidays, and his father’s letters to Mrs. Watson at the beginning of this year have reference to this play.

This year Charles Dickens wrote and published *The Haunted Man*, which he had found himself unable to finish for the previous Christmas. It was the last of the Christmas books. He abandoned them in favour of a Christmas number of *Household Words*, which he continued annually for many years in *Household Words* and *All the Year Round*, and in which he had the collaboration of other writers. *The Haunted Man* was dramatised and produced at the Adelphi Theatre, under the management of Mr. Benjamin Webster. Charles Dickens read the book himself, at Tavistock House, to a party of actors and actresses.

At the end of the year he wrote the first number of *Bleak House*, although it was not published until March of the following year. With the close attention and the hard work he gave, from the time of its starting, to his weekly periodical, he found it to be most desirable, now, in beginning a new monthly serial, that he should be ready with some numbers in advance before the appearance of the first number.

A provincial tour for the ‘Guild’ took place at the end



of the year. A letter to his wife, from Clifton, in November, gives a notion of the general success and enthusiasm with which the plays were attended. The 'new Hardman,' to whom he alludes as taking that part in Sir E. B. Lytton's comedy in the place of Mr. Forster, was Mr. John Tenniel, who was a new addition, and a very valuable and pleasant one, to the company. Mr. Topham, the delightful water-colour painter, Mr. Dudley Costello, and Mr. Wilkie Collins were also new recruits to the company of 'splendid strollers' about this time. A letter to Mr. Wills, asking him to take a part in the comedy, is given here. He never did *act* with the company, but he complied with Charles Dickens' desire that he should be 'in the scheme' by giving it all sorts of assistance, and almost invariably being one of the party in the provincial tours.

We give in this year the first letter to Mr. Layard (now Sir Austen H. Layard), the great Nineveh traveller, for whom Charles Dickens, as his letters show, conceived at once the affectionate friendship which went on increasing from this time for the rest of his life.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Sunday Night, Fifth January, 1851.*

Sir Edward  
Bulwer  
Lytton.

MY DEAR BULWER,—I am so sorry to have missed you! I had gone down to Forster, comedy in hand.

I think it *most admirable*.<sup>1</sup> Full of character, strong in interest, rich in capital situations, and *certain to go nobly*. You know how highly I thought of *Money*, but I sincerely think these three acts finer. I did not think of the slight suggestions you make, but I said, *en passant*, that perhaps the drunken scene might do better on the stage a little concentrated. I don't believe it would require even that, with the leading-up which you propose. I cannot say too much of the comedy to express what I think and feel concerning it; and I look at it, too, remember, with the yellow eye of

<sup>1</sup> *Not So Bad as We Seem; or, Many Sides to a Character.*

an actor! I should have taken to it (need I say so!) *con amore* in any case, but I should have been jealous of your reputation, exactly as I appreciate your generosity. If I had a misgiving of ten lines I should have scrupulously mentioned it.

Stone will take the Duke capitally; and I will answer for his being got into doing it *very well*. Looking down the perspective of a few winter evenings here, I am confident about him. Forster will be thoroughly sound and real. Lemon is so surprisingly sensible and trustworthy on the stage, that I don't think any actor could touch his part as he will; and I hope you will have opportunities of testing the accuracy of this prediction. Egg ought to do the Author to absolute perfection. As to Jerrold—there he stands in the play! I would propose Leech (well made up) for Easy. He is a good name, and I see nothing else for him.

This brings me to my own part. If we had any one, or could get any one, for Wilmot, I could do (I think) something so near your meaning in Sir Gilbert, that I let him go with a pang. Assumption has charms for me—I hardly know for how many wild reasons—so delightful, that I feel a loss of, oh! I can't say what exquisite foolery, when I lose a chance of being some one in voice, etc., not at all like myself. But—I speak quite freely, knowing you will not mistake me—I know from experience that we could find nobody to hold the play together in Wilmot if I didn't do it. I think I could touch the gallant, generous, careless pretence, with the real man at the bottom of it, so as to take the audience with him from the first scene. I am quite sure I understand your meaning; and I am absolutely certain that as Jerrold, Forster, and Stone came in, I could, as a mere little bit of mechanics, present them better by doing that part, and paying as much attention to their points as my own, than another amateur actor could. Therefore I throw up my cap for Wilmot, and hereby devote myself to him, heart and head!

I ought to tell you that in a play we once rehearsed and never played (but rehearsed several times, and very care-



fully), I saw Lemon do a piece of reality with a rugged pathos in it, which I felt, as I stood on the stage with him, to be extraordinarily good. In the serious part of Sir Gilbert he will surprise you. And he has an intuitive discrimination in such things which will just keep the suspicious part from being too droll at the outset—which will just show a glimpse of something in the depths of it.

The moment I come back to town (within a fortnight, please God!) I will ascertain from Forster where you are. Then I will propose to you that we call our company together, agree upon one general plan of action, and that you and I immediately begin to see and book our Vice-Presidents, etc. Further, I think we ought to see about the Queen. I would suggest our playing first about three weeks before the opening of the Exhibition, in order that it may be the town talk before the country people and foreigners come. Macready thinks with me that a very large sum of money may be got in London.

I propose (for cheapness and many other considerations) to make a theatre expressly for the purpose, which we can put up and take down—say in the Hanover Square Rooms—and move into the country. As Watson wanted something of a theatre made for his forthcoming *Little Go*, I have made it a sort of model of what I mean, and shall be able to test its working powers before I see you. Many things that, for portability, were to be avoided in Mr. Hewitt's theatre, I have replaced with less expensive and weighty contrivances.

Now, my dear Bulwer, I have come to the small hours, and am writing alone here, as if *I* were writing something to do what your comedy will. At such a time the temptation is strong upon me to say a great deal more, but I will only say this—in mercy to you—that I do devoutly believe that this plan carried, will entirely change the status of the literary man in England, and make a revolution in his position, which no Government, no power on earth but his own, could ever effect. I have implicit confidence in the scheme—so splendidly begun—if we carry it out with a steadfast energy. I have a strong conviction that we hold in

our hands the peace and honour of men of letters for centuries to come, and that you are destined to be their best and most enduring benefactor.

Oh! what a procession of New Years might walk out of all this, after we are very dusty!

Ever yours faithfully.

PS.—I have forgotten something. I suggest this title: 'Knowing the World; or, Not So Bad as We Seem.'

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Twenty-fourth January, 1851.*

MY DEAR MRS. WATSON,—Kate will have told you, I daresay, that my despondency on coming to town was relieved by a talk with Lady John Russell, of which you were the subject, and in which she spoke of you with an earnestness of old affection and regard that did me good. I date my recovery (which has been slow) from that hour. I am still feeble, and liable to sudden outbursts of causeless rage and demoniacal gloom, but I shall be better presently. What a thing it is, that we can't be always innocently merry and happy with those we like best without looking out at the back window of life! Well, one day perhaps—after a long night—the blinds on that side of the house will be down for ever, and nothing left but the bright prospect in front.

The Hon.  
Mrs.  
Watson.

Concerning supper-toast (of which I feel bound to make some mention), you did, as you always do, right, and exactly what was most agreeable to me.

My love to your excellent husband (I wonder whether he and the dining-room have got to rights yet!), and to the jolly little boys and the calm little girl. Somehow, I shall always think of Lord Spencer as eternally walking up and down the platform at Rugby, in a high chill wind, with no apparent hope of a train—as I left him; and somehow I always think of Rockingham, after coming away, as if I belonged to it and had left a bit of my heart behind, which it is so very odd to find wanting twenty times a day.

Ever, dear Mrs. Watson, faithfully yours, and his.



## 282 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Tuesday Night, Twenty-eighth January, 1851.*

Hon. Mrs.  
Watson.

MY DEAR, DEAR MRS. WATSON,—I presume you mean Mr. Stafford and Mr. Stopford to pay Wilson (as I have instructed him) a guinea each? Am I right? In that just case I still owe you a guinea for *my* part. I was going to send you a post-office order for that amount, when a faint sense of absurdity mantled my ingenuous visage with a blush, and I thought it better to owe you the money until we meet. I hope it may be soon!

I believe I may lay claim to the mysterious inkstand, also to a volume lettered on the back, *Shipwrecks and Disasters at Sea, II.*, which I left when I came down at Christmas. Will you take care of them as hostages until we effect an exchange?

Charley went back in great spirits, threatening to write to George. It was a very wet night, and John took him to the railway. He said, on his return: 'Mas'r Charles went off very gay, sir. He found some young gen'lmen as was his friends in the train, sir.' 'Come,' said I, 'I am glad of that. How many were there? Two or three?' 'Oh dear, sir, there was a matter of forty, sir. All with their heads out o' the coach windows, sir, a-hallooing "Dickens!" all over the station!'

Her ladyship<sup>1</sup> and the ward of the FIZ-ZISH-UN send their best loves, in which I heartily join. If you and your dear husband come to town before we bring out Bulwer's comedy, I think we must have a snug reading of it.

Ever, dear Mrs. Watson, faithfully yours.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Friday, Thirty-first January, 1851.*

Mr. Mark  
Lemon.

MY DEAR LEMON,—We are deeply sorry to receive the mournful intelligence of your calamity. But we know that you will both have found comfort in that blessed belief, from which the sacred figure with the child upon His knee is, in all stages of our lives, inseparable, for of such is the kingdom of God!

<sup>1</sup> Lady Clutterbuck—a part in *Used Up*, played by Mrs. Dickens at Rockingham Theatricals.

We join in affectionate loves to you and your dear wife. She well deserves your praise, I am sure.

Ever affectionately yours.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Monday, Tenth February, 1851.*

MY DEAR WILLS,—There is a small part in Bulwer's comedy, but very good what there is—not much—my servant, who opens the play, which I should be very glad if you would like to do.

Mr. W. H. Wills.

Pray understand that there is no end of men who would do it, and that if you have the least objection to the trouble, I don't make this the expression of a wish even. Otherwise, I would like you to be in the scheme, which is a very great and important one, and which cannot have too many men who are steadily—not flightily, like some of our friends—in earnest, and who are not to be lightly discouraged.

If you do the part, I would like to have a talk with you about the secretarial duties. They must be performed by some one I clearly see, and will require good business direction. I should like to put some young fellow, to whom such work and its remuneration would be an object, under your eye, if we could find one entire and perfect chrysolite anywhere. Let me know whether I am to rate you on the ship's books or not. If yes, consider yourself 'called' to the reading (by Macready) at Forster's rooms, on Wednesday, the nineteenth, at three.

Ever yours.

HÔTEL WAGRAM, PARIS, *Thursday, Twelfth February, 1851.*

MY DEAREST KATE,—I received your letter this morning (on returning from an expedition to a market thirteen miles away, which involved the necessity of getting up at five), and am delighted to have such good accounts of all at home.

Mrs. Charles Dickens.

We had D'Orsay to dinner yesterday, and I am hurried to dress now, in order to pay a promised visit to his *atelier*. He was very happy with us, and is much improved both in spirits and looks. Lord and Lady Castlereagh live downstairs here, and we went to them in the evening, and after-



wards brought him upstairs to smoke. To-night we are going to see Lemaître in the renowned *Belphégor* piece. To-morrow at noon we leave Paris for Calais (the Boulogne boat does not serve our turn), and unless the weather for crossing should be absurd, I shall be at home, please God, early on the evening of Saturday. It continues to be delightful weather here—gusty, but very clear and fine. Leech and I had a charming country walk before breakfast this morning at Poissy, and enjoyed it very much. The rime was on the grass and trees, and the country most delicious.

Spencer Lyttelton is a capital companion on a trip, and a great addition to the party. We have got on famously and been very facetious. Ever most affectionately.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Friday Night, late, Twenty-first February, 1851.*

Miss Mary Boyle. MY DEAR MISS BOYLE,—I have devoted a couple of hours this evening to going very carefully over your paper (which I had read before) and to endeavouring to bring it closer, and to lighten it, and to give it that sort of compactness which a habit of composition, and of disciplining one's thoughts like a regiment, and of studying the art of putting each soldier into his right place, may have gradually taught me to think necessary. I hope, when you see it in print, you will not be alarmed by my use of the pruning-knife. I have tried to exercise it with the utmost delicacy and discretion, and to suggest to you, especially towards the end, how this sort of writing (regard being had to the size of the journal in which it appears) requires to be compressed, and is made pleasanter by compression. This all reads very solemnly, but only because I want you to read it (I mean the article) with as loving an eye as I have truly tried to touch it with a loving and gentle hand. I propose to call it 'My Mahogany Friend.' The other name is too long, and I think not attractive. Until I go to the office to-morrow and see what is actually in hand, I am not certain of the number in which it will appear, but Georgy shall write on Monday and tell you. We are always a fortnight in advance of the public, or the mechanical work could not be done. I think there are many things in it that are *very pretty*. The Katie

part is particularly well done. If I don't say more, it is because I have a heavy sense, in all cases, of the responsibility of encouraging any one to enter on that thorny track, where the prizes are so few and the blanks so many; where—

But I won't write you a sermon. With the fire going out, and the first shadows of a new story hovering in a ghostly way about me (as they usually begin to do, when I have finished an old one), I am in danger of doing the heavy business, and becoming a heavy guardian, or something of that sort, instead of the light and airy Joe.

So good-night, and believe that you may always trust me, and never find a grim expression (towards you) in any that I wear.

Ever yours.

*Twenty-first February, 1851.*

Oh my dear Roberts, if you knew the trouble we have had and the money we pay for Drury Lane for one night for the benefit, you would never dream of it for the dinner. *There isn't possibility of getting a theatre.*

Mr. David  
Roberts,  
R.A.

I will do all I can for your charming little daughter, and hope to squeeze in half a dozen ladies at the last; but we must not breathe the idea or we shall not dare to execute it, there will be such an outcry.

Faithfully yours.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Twenty-seventh February, 1851.*

MY DEAR MACREADY,—Forster told me to-day that you wish Tennyson's sonnet to be read after your health is given on Saturday. I am perfectly certain that it would not do at that time. I am quite convinced that the audience would not receive it, under those exciting circumstances, as it ought to be received. If I had to read it, I would on no account undertake to do so at that period, in a great room crowded with a dense company. I have an instinctive assurance that it would fail. Being with Bulwer this morning, I communicated your wish to him, and he immediately felt as I do. I could enter into many reasons which induce me to form this opinion. But I believe that you have

Mr. W. C.  
Macready.



that confidence in me that I may spare you the statement of them.

I want to know one thing from you. As I shall be obliged to be at the London Tavern in the afternoon of to-morrow, Friday (I write, observe, on Thursday night), I shall be much helped in the arrangements if you will send me your answer by a messenger (addressed here) on the receipt of this. Which would you prefer—that ‘Auld Lang Syne’ should be sung after your health is given and before you return thanks, or after you have spoken?

I cannot forbear a word about last night. I think I have told you sometimes, my much-loved friend, how, when I was a mere boy, I was one of your faithful and devoted adherents in the pit; I believe as true a member of that true host of followers as it has ever boasted. As I improved myself and was improved by favouring circumstances in mind and fortune, I only became the more earnest (if it were possible) in my study of you. No light portion of my life arose before me when the quiet vision to which I am beholden, in I don’t know how great a degree, or for how much—who does?—faded so nobly from my bodily eyes last night. And if I were to try to tell you what I felt—of regret for its being past for ever, and of joy in the thought that you could have taken your leave of *me* but in God’s own time—I should only blot this paper with some drops that would certainly not be of ink, and give very faint expression to very strong emotions.

What is all this in writing? It is only some sort of relief to my full heart, and shows very little of it to you; but that’s something, so I let it go.—Ever, my dearest Macready,

Your most affectionate Friend.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Tuesday Night, Fourth March, 1851.*

Sir Edward  
Bulwer  
Lytton,

MY DEAR BULWER,—I know you will be glad to hear what I have to tell you.

I wrote to the Duke of Devonshire this morning, enclosing him the rough proof of the scheme, and plainly telling him what we wanted—*i.e.* to play for the first time at his house, to the Queen and Court. Within a couple of hours he wrote me as follows:

‘DEAR SIR,—I have read with very great interest the prospectus of the new endowment which you have confided to my perusal.

‘Your manner of doing so is a proof that I am honoured by your goodwill and approbation.

‘I’m truly happy to offer you my earnest and sincere co-operation. My services, my house, and my subscription will be at your orders. And I beg you to let me see you before long, not merely to converse upon this subject, but because I have long had the greatest wish to improve our acquaintance, which has, as yet, been only one of crowded rooms.’

This is quite princely, I think, and will push us along as brilliantly as heart could desire. Don’t you think so too?

Yesterday Lemon and I saw the Secretary of the National Provident Institution (the best office for the purpose, I am inclined to think) and stated all our requirements. We appointed to meet the chairman and directors next Tuesday; so on the day of our reading and dining I hope we shall have that matter in good train.

The theatre is also under consultation; and directly after the reading we shall go briskly to work in all departments.

I hear nothing but praises of your Macready speech—of its eloquence, delicacy, and perfect taste, all of which it is good to hear, though I know it all before-hand as well as most men can tell it me.

Ever cordially.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Saturday Night, Eighth March, 1851.*

MY DEAR EGG,—I think *you* told *me* that Mr. <sup>Mr.</sup> Wilkie Collins would be glad to play any part in <sup>Augustus</sup> Bulwer’s Comedy; and I think *I* told *you* that I <sup>Egg,</sup> considered him a very desirable recruit. There is a Valet, <sup>A.R.A.</sup> called (as I remember) Smart—a small part, but, what there is of it, decidedly good; he opens the play—which I should be delighted to assign to him, and in which he would have an opportunity of dressing your humble servant, frothing some chocolate with an obsolete milling-machine that must be revived for the purpose, arranging the room, and dispatching other similar ‘business,’ dear to actors. Will you undertake to ask him if I shall cast him in this part? If yes, I will call him



to the reading on Wednesday; have the pleasure of leaving my card for him (say where), and beg him to favour us with his company at dinner on Wednesday evening. I knew his father well, and should be very glad to know him.

Write me a word in answer, and believe me ever,

Faithfully yours.

KNUTSFORD LODGE, GREAT MALVERN, *Twentieth March*, 1851.

Mr. David  
Roberts,  
R.A.

MY DEAR ROBERTS,—Mrs. Dickens has been unwell, and I am here with her. I want you to give a quarter of an hour to the perusal of the enclosed prospectus; to consider the immense value of the design, if it be successful, to artists young and old; and then to bestow your favourable consideration on the assistance I am going to ask of you for the sake and in the name of the cause.

For the representation of the new comedy Bulwer has written for us, to start this scheme, I am having an ingenious theatre made by Webster's people, for erection on certain nights in the Hanover Square Rooms. But it will first be put up in the Duke of Devonshire's house, where the first representation will take place before a brilliant company, including (I believe) the Queen.

Now, will you paint us a scene—the scene of which I enclose Bulwer's description from the prompter's book? It will be a cloth with a set-piece. It should be sent to your studio or put up in a theatre painting-room, as you would prefer. I have asked Stanny to do another scene, Edwin Landseer, and Louis Haghe. The Devonshire House performance will probably be on Monday, the Twenty-eighth of April. I should want to have the scenery complete by the twentieth, as it would require to be elaborately worked and rehearsed. *You* could do it in no time after sending in your pictures, and will you?

What the value of such aid would be I need not say. I say no more of the reasons that induce me to ask it, because if they are not in the prospectus they are nowhere.

On Monday and Tuesday nights I shall be in town for re-

hearsal, but until then I shall be here. Will you let me have a line from you in reply?—My dear Roberts,  
 Ever faithfully yours.

*Description of the Scene proposed:*

STREETS OF LONDON IN THE TIME OF GEORGE I.

In perspective, an alley inscribed DEADMAN'S LANE; a large, old-fashioned, gloomy, mysterious house in the corner, marked No. 1. (*This No. 1 Deadman's Lane has been constantly referred to in the play as the abode of a mysterious female figure, who enters masked, and passes into this house on the scene being disclosed.*) It is night, and there are moonlight mediums.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, Tuesday Morning, Twenty-fifth March, 1851.

MY DEAR BULWER,—Coming home at midnight last night after our first rehearsal, I find your letter. I write to entreat you, if you make any change in the first three acts, to let it be only of the slightest kind. Because we are now fairly under way, everybody is already drilled into his place, and in two or three rehearsals those acts will be in a tolerably presentable state.

Sir Edward  
Bulwer  
Lytton.

It is of vital importance that we should get the last two acts *soon*. The Queen and Prince are coming—Phipps wrote me yesterday the most earnest letter possible—the time is fearfully short, and we *must* have the comedy in such a state as that it will go like a machine. Whatever you do, for Heaven's sake don't be persuaded to endanger that!

Even at the risk of your falling into the pit with despair at beholding anything of the comedy in its present state, if you can by any possibility come down to Covent Garden Theatre to-night, do. I hope you will see in Lemon the germ of a very fine presentation of Sir Geoffrey. I think Topham, too, will do Easy admirably.

We really did wonders last night in the way of arrangements. I see the ground-plan of the first three acts distinctly. The dressing and furnishing and so forth, will be a perfect picture, and I will answer for the men in three weeks' time.—In great haste, my dear Bulwer,

Ever faithfully yours.



H. W. OFFICE, *Monday, Twenty-sixth March, 1851.*

Mrs.  
Charles  
Dickens.

MY DEAREST KATE,—I reserve all news of the play until I come down. The Queen appoints the Thirtieth of April. There is no end of trouble.

My father slept well last night, and is as well this morning (they send word) as any one in such a state, so cut and slashed, can be. I have been waiting at home for Bulwer all the morning (it is now two), and am now waiting for Lemon before I go up there. I will not close this note until I have been.

It is raining here incessantly. The streets are in a most miserable state. A van, containing the goods of some unfortunate family moving, has broken down close outside, and the whole scene is a picture of dreariness.

The children are quite well and very happy. I had Dora down this morning, who was quite charmed to see me. That Miss Ketteridge appointed two to-day for seeing the house, and probably she is at this moment disparaging it.

My father is very weak and low, but not worse, I hope, than might be expected. I am going home to dine with the children. By working here late to-night (coming back after dinner) I can finish what I have to do for the play. Therefore I hope to be with you to-morrow, in good time for dinner.  
Ever affectionately.

GREAT MALVERN, *Twenty-ninth March, 1851.*

Mrs.  
Cowden  
Clarke.

MY DEAR MRS. COWDEN CLARKE,—Ah, those were days indeed, when we were so fatigued at dinner that we couldn't speak, and so revived at supper that we couldn't go to bed; when wild in inns the noble savage ran; and all the world was a stage, gas-lighted in a double sense—by the Young Gas and the old one! When Emmeline Montague (now Compton, and the mother of two children) came to rehearse in our new comedy<sup>1</sup> the other night, I nearly fainted. The gush of recollection was so overpowering that I couldn't bear it.

<sup>1</sup> *Not so Bad as We Seem.*

I use the portfolio <sup>1</sup> for managerial papers still. That's something.

But all this does not thank you for your book.<sup>2</sup> I have not got it yet (being here with Mrs. Dickens, who has been very unwell), but I shall be in town early in the week, and shall bring it down to read quietly on these hills, where the wind blows as freshly as if there were no Popes and no Cardinals whatsoever—nothing the matter anywhere. I thank you a thousand times, beforehand, for the pleasure you are going to give me. I am full of faith. Your sister Emma, she is doing work of some sort on the P.S. side of the boxes, in some dark theatre, *I know*, but where, I wonder. W.<sup>3</sup> has not proposed to her yet, has he? I understood he was going to offer his hand and heart, and lay his leg<sup>4</sup> at her feet.

Ever faithfully yours.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Thursday Morning, Third April, 1851.*

MY DEAR WILLS,—I took my threatened walk Mr. W. H.  
Wills. last night, but it yielded little but generalities.

However, I thought of something for *to-night*, that I think will make a splendid paper. I have an idea that it might be connected with the gas paper (making gas a great agent in an effective police), and made one of the articles. This is it: 'A Night in a Station-House.' If you would go down to our friend Mr. Yardley, at Scotland Yard, and get a letter or order to the acting chief authority at that station-house in Bow Street, to enable us to hear the charges, observe the internal economy of the station-house all night, go round to the cells with the visiting policeman, etc., I would stay there, say from twelve to-night to four or five in the morning. We might have a 'night-cap,' a fire, and some tea at the office hard by. If you could conveniently borrow an hour or two from the night we could both go. If not, I would go alone. It would make a wonderful good paper at a most appropriate

<sup>1</sup> An embroidered blotting-book given by Mrs. Cowden Clarke.

<sup>2</sup> One of the series in *The Girlhood of Shakespeare's Heroines*, dedicated to Charles Dickens.

<sup>3</sup> Wilmot, Mr. Macready's prompter, who was engaged to accompany the acting-tours.

<sup>4</sup> A wooden one.



time, when the back slums of London are going to be invaded by all sorts of strangers.

You needn't exactly say that *I* was going *in propriâ* (unless it were necessary), and, of course, you wouldn't say that I propose to-night, because I am so worn by the sad arrangements in which I am engaged, and by what led to them, that I cannot take my natural rest. But to-morrow night we go to the gas-works. I might not be so disposed for this station-house observation as I shall be to-night for a long time, and I see a most singular and admirable chance for us in the descriptive way, not to be lost.

Therefore, if you will arrange the thing before I come down at four this afternoon, any of the Scotland Yard people will do it, I should think; if our friend by any accident should not be there, I will go into it.

If they should recommend any other station-house as better for the purpose, or would think it better for us to go to more than one under the guidance of some trustworthy man, of course we will pay any man and do as they recommend. But I think one topping station-house would be best.

Faithfully ever.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Nineteenth April, 1851.*

Mr. Thomas  
Mitton.

MY DEAR MITTON,—I have been in trouble, or I should have written to you sooner. My wife has been, and is, far from well. My poor father's death caused me much distress. I came to London last Monday to preside at a public dinner—played with little Dora, my youngest child, before I went, and was told when I left the chair that she had died in a moment. I am quite happy again, but I have undergone a good deal.

I am not going back to Malvern, but have let this house until September, and taken the 'Fort,' at Broadstairs.

Faithfully yours.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *Monday, Twenty-eighth April, 1851.*

Sir Edward  
Bulwer  
Lytton.

MY DEAR BULWER,—The Duke has read the play. He asked for it a week ago, and had it. He has been at Brighton since. He called here

before eleven on Saturday morning, but I was out on the play business, so I went to him at Devonshire House yesterday. He almost knows the play by heart. He is supremely delighted with it, and critically understands it. In proof of the latter part of this sentence I may mention that he had made two or three memoranda of trivial doubtful points, *every one of which had attracted our attention in rehearsal*, as I found when he showed them to me. He thoroughly understands and appreciates the comedy of the Duke—threw himself back in his chair and laughed, as I say of Walpole, ‘till I thought he ‘d have choked,’ about his first Duchess, who was a Percy. He suggested that he shouldn’t say: ‘You know how to speak to the heart of a Noble,’ because it was not likely that he would call himself a Noble. He thought we might close up the Porter and Softhead a little more (already done), and was so charmed and delighted to recall the comedy that he was more pleased than any boy you ever saw when I repeated two or three of the speeches in my part for him. He is coming to the rehearsal to-day (we rehearse now at Devonshire House, three days a-week, all day long), and, since he read the play, has conceived a most magnificent and noble improvement in the Devonshire House plan, by which, I daresay, we shall get another thousand or fifteen hundred pounds. There is not a grain of distrust or doubt in him. I am perfectly certain that he would confide to me, and does confide to me, his whole mind on the subject.

More than this, the Duke comes out the best man in the play. I am happy to report to you that Stone does the honourable manly side of that pride inexpressibly better than I should have supposed possible in him. The scene where he makes that reparation to the slandered woman is *certain* to be an effect. He is *not* a jest upon the order of Dukes, but a great tribute to them. I have sat looking at the play (as you may suppose) pretty often, and carefully weighing every syllable of it. I see, in the Duke, the most estimable character in the piece. I am as sure that I represent the audience in this as I am that I hear the words when they are spoken before me. The first time that scene with Hardman was seriously done, it made an effect on the company that quite sur-



prised and delighted me ; and whenever and wherever it is done (but most of all at Devonshire House) the result will be the same.

Every one is greatly improved. I wrote an earnest note to Forster a few days ago on the subject of his being too loud and violent. He has since subdued himself with the most admirable pains, and improved the part a thousand per cent. All the points are gradually being worked and smoothed out with the utmost neatness all through the play. They are all most heartily anxious and earnest, and, upon the least hitch, will do the same thing twenty times over. The scenery, furniture, etc., are rapidly advancing towards completion, and will be beautiful. The dresses are a perfect blaze of colour, and there is not a pocket-flap or a scrap of lace that has not been made according to Egg's drawings to the quarter of an inch. Every wig has been made from an old print or picture. From the Duke's snuff-box to Will's Coffee-house, you will find everything in perfect truth and keeping. I have resolved that whenever we come to a weak place in the acting, it must, somehow or other, be made a strong one. The places that I used to be most afraid of are among the best points now.

Will you come to the dress rehearsal on the Tuesday evening before the Queen's night? There will be no one present but the Duke.

I write in the greatest haste, for the rehearsal time is close at hand, and I have the master carpenter and gasman to see before we begin.

Miss Coutts is one of the most sensible of women, and if I had not seen the Duke yesterday, I would have shown her the play directly. But there can't be any room for anxiety on the head that has troubled you so much. You may clear it from your mind as completely as the Gunpowder Plot.

In great haste, ever cordially.

No. 16 WELLINGTON STREET NORTH, STRAND,  
Monday, Twelfth May, 1851.

MY DEAR COLLINS,—My only hesitation on the matter is this: I apprehend that the Duke, in his great generosity, intends to give a sort of supper to the whole party. I infer this from his so particularly desiring to know their number. *Now, I have already given him the list;* and he is so delicate that he would not even ask Landseer without first asking me. Under these circumstances, I feel the introduction of a stranger like Mr. Ward's brother—Mr. Ward and his wife being already on the list—a kind of difficulty; but I do not like to refuse compliance with any wish of my faithful and attached valet, whom I greatly esteem. I therefore merely mention this and send him the order.

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

I have been here all day, and am covered with Sawdust.

Faithfully yours always.

Saturday, Twenty-fourth May, 1851.

MY DEAR MACREADY,—We are getting in a good heap of money for the Guild. The comedy has been very much improved, in many respects, since you read it. The scene to which you refer is certainly one of the most telling in the play. And there is a farce to be produced on Tuesday next, wherein a distinguished amateur will sustain a variety of assumption-parts, and in particular, Samuel Weller and Mrs. Gamp, of which I say no more. I am pining for Broadstairs, where the children are at present. I lurk from the sun, during the best part of the day, in a villainous compound of darkness, canvas, sawdust, general dust, stale gas (involving a vague smell of pepper), and disenchanted properties. But I hope to get down on Wednesday or Thursday.

Mr. W. C.  
Macready.

Ah! you country gentlemen, who live at home at ease, how little do you think of us among the London fleas! But they tell me you are coming in for Dorsetshire. You must be very careful, when you come to town to attend to your parliamentary duties, never to ask your way of people in the streets. They will misdirect you for what the vulgar call 'a



lark,' meaning, in this connection, a jest at your expense. Always go into some respectable shop or apply to a policeman. You will know him by his being dressed in blue, with very dull silver buttons, and by the top of his hat being made of sticking-plaster. You may perhaps see in some odd place an intelligent-looking man, with a curious little wooden table before him and three thimbles on it. He will want you to bet, but don't do it. He really desires to cheat you. And don't buy at auctions where the best plated goods are being knocked down for next to nothing. These, too, are delusions. If you wish to go to the play to see real good acting (though a little more subdued than perfect tragedy should be), I would recommend you to see —— at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane. Anybody will show it to you. It is near the Strand, and you may know it by seeing no company whatever at any of the doors. Cab fares are eighteen pence a mile. A mile London measure is half a Dorsetshire mile, recollect. Porter is twopence per pint; what is called stout is fourpence. The Zoological Gardens are in the Regent's Park, and the price of admission is one shilling. Of the streets, I would recommend you to see Regent Street and the Quadrant, Bond Street, Piccadilly, Oxford Street, and Cheapside. I think these will please you after a time, though the tumult and bustle will at first bewilder you. If I can serve you in any way, pray command me. And with my best regards to your happy family, so remote from this Babel, believe me, my dear Friend,

Ever affectionately yours.

PS.—I forgot to mention just now that the black equestrian figure you will see at Charing Cross, as you go down to the House, is a statue of *King Charles the First*.

BROADSTAIRS, *Eighth July*, 1851.

The Earl of Carlisle.      MY DEAR LORD CARLISLE,—We shall be delighted to see you, if you will come down on Saturday. Mr. Lemon may perhaps be here, with his wife, but no one else. And we can give you a bed that may be surpassed, with a welcome that certainly cannot be.

The general character of Broadstairs as to size and ac-

commodation was happily expressed by Miss Eden, when she wrote to the Duke of Devonshire (as he told me), saying how grateful she felt to a certain sailor, who asked leave to see her garden, for not plucking it bodily up, and sticking it in his button-hole.

As we think of putting mignonette-boxes outside the windows, for the younger children to sleep in by and by, I am afraid we should give your servant the cramp if we hardly undertook to lodge him. But in case you should decide to bring one, he is easily disposable hard by.

Don't come by the boat. It is rather tedious, and both departs and arrives at inconvenient hours. There is a railway train from the Dover terminus to Ramsgate, at half-past twelve in the day, which will bring you in three hours. Another at half-past four in the afternoon. If you will tell me by which you come (I hope the former), I will await you at the terminus with my little brougham.

You will have for a night-light in the room we shall give you, the North Foreland lighthouse. That and the sea and air are our only lions. It is a very rough little place, but a very pleasant one, and you will make it pleasanter than ever to me.

Faithfully yours always.

BROADSTAIRS, KENT, *Eleventh July*, 1851.

MY DEAR MRS. WATSON,—I am so desperately indignant with you for writing me that short apology for a note, and pretending to suppose that under any circumstances I could fail to read with interest anything *you* wrote to me, that I have more than half a mind to inflict a regular letter upon you. If I were not the gentlest of men I should do it!

The Hon.  
Mrs.  
Watson.

Poor dear Haldimand, I have thought of him so often. That kind of decay is so inexpressibly affecting and piteous to me, that I have no words to express my compassion and sorrow. When I was at Abbotsford, I saw in a vile glass case the last clothes Scott wore. Among them an old white hat, which seemed to be tumbled and bent and broken by the uneasy, purposeless wandering, hither and thither, of his heavy head. It so embodied Lockhart's pathetic description



of him when he tried to write, and laid down his pen and cried, that it associated itself in my mind with broken powers and mental weakness from that hour. I fancy Haldimand in such another, going listlessly about that beautiful place, and remembering the happy hours we have passed with him, and his goodness and truth, I think what a dream we live in, until it seems for the moment the saddest dream that ever was dreamed. Pray tell us if you hear more of him. We really loved him.

To go to the opposite side of life, let me tell you that a week or so ago I took Charley and three of his schoolfellows down the river gipsying. I secured the services of Charley's godfather (an old friend of mine,<sup>1</sup> and a noble fellow with boys), and went down to Slough, accompanied by two immense hampers from Fortnum and Mason, on (I believe) the wettest morning ever seen out of the tropics.

It cleared before we got to Slough; but the boys, who had got up at four (we being due at eleven), had horrible misgivings that we might not come, in consequence of which we saw them looking into the carriages before us, all face. They seemed to have no bodies whatever, but to be all face; their countenances lengthened to that surprising extent. When they saw us, the faces shut up as if they were upon strong springs, and their waistcoats developed themselves in the usual places. When the first hamper came out of the luggage-van, I was conscious of their dancing behind the guard; when the second came out with bottles in it, they all stood wildly on one leg. We then got a couple of flies to drive to the boat-house. I put them in the first, but they couldn't sit still a moment, and were perpetually flying up and down like the toy figures in the sham snuff-boxes. In this order we went on to 'Tom Brown's, the tailor's,' where they all dressed in aquatic costume, and then to the boat-house, where they all cried in shrill chorus for 'Mahogany'—a gentleman so called by reason of his sunburnt complexion, a waterman by profession. (He was likewise called during the day 'Hog' and 'Hogany,' and seemed to be unconscious of any proper name whatsoever.) We embarked, the sun shining now, in

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Thomas Beard.

a galley with a striped awning, which I had ordered for the purpose, and all rowing hard, went down the river. We dined in a field; what I suffered for fear those boys should get drunk, the struggles I underwent in a contest of feeling between hospitality and prudence, must ever remain untold. I feel, even now, old with the anxiety of that tremendous hour. They were very good, however. The speech of one became thick, and his eyes too like lobsters' to be comfortable, but only temporarily. He recovered, and I suppose outlived the salad he took. I have heard nothing to the contrary, and I imagine I should have been implicated on the inquest if there had been one. We had tea and rashers of bacon at a public-house, and came home, the last five or six miles in a prodigious thunderstorm. This was the great success of the day, which they certainly enjoyed more than anything else. The dinner had been great, and Mahogany had informed them, after a bottle of light champagne, that he never would come up the river 'with ginger company' any more. But the getting so completely wet through was the culminating part of the entertainment. You never in your life saw such objects as they were; and their perfect unconsciousness that it was at all advisable to go home and change, or that there was anything to prevent their standing at the station two mortal hours to see me off, was wonderful. As to getting them to their dames with any sort of sense that they were damp, I abandoned the idea. I thought it a success when they went down the street as civilly as if they were just up and newly dressed, though they really looked as if you could have rubbed them to rags with a touch, like saturated curl-paper.

I am sorry you have not been able to see our play, which I suppose you won't now, for I take it you are not going on Monday, the twenty-first, our last night in town? It is worth seeing, not for the getting up (which modesty forbids me to approve), but for the little bijou it is, in the scenery, dresses, and appointments. They are such as never can be got together again, because such men as Stanfield, Roberts, Grieve, Haghe, Egg, and others, never can be again combined in such a work. Everything has been done at its best



from all sorts of authorities, and it is really very beautiful to look at.

I find I am 'used up' by the Exhibition. I don't say 'there is nothing in it'—there's too much. I have only been twice; so many things bewildered me. I have a natural horror of sights, and the fusion of so many sights in one has not decreased it. I am not sure that I have seen anything but the fountain and perhaps the Amazon. It is a dreadful thing to be obliged to be false, but when any one says, 'Have you seen ——?' I say, 'Yes,' because if I don't, I know he'll explain it, and I can't bear that. —— took all the school one day. The school was composed of a hundred 'infants,' who got among the horses' legs in crossing to the main entrance from the Kensington Gate, and came reeling out from between the wheels of coaches undisturbed in mind. They were clinging to horses, I am told, all over the park.

When they were collected and added up by the frantic monitors, they were all right. They were then regaled with cake, etc., and went tottering and staring all over the place; the greater part wetting their forefingers and drawing a wavy pattern on every accessible object. One infant strayed. He was not missed. Ninety and nine were taken home, supposed to be the whole collection, but this particular infant went to Hammersmith. He was found by the police at night, going round and round the turnpike, which he still supposed to be a part of the Exhibition. He had the same opinion of the police, also of Hammersmith workhouse, where he passed the night. When his mother came for him in the morning, he asked when it would be over? It was a great Exhibition, he said, but he thought it long.

As I begin to have a foreboding that you will think the same of this act of vengeance of mine, this present letter, I shall make an end of it, with my heartiest and most loving remembrances to Watson. I should have liked him of all things to have been in the Eton expedition, tell him, and to have heard a song (by the bye, I have forgotten that) sung in the thunderstorm, solos by Charley, chorus by the friends, describing the career of a booby who was plucked at college, every verse ending:

I don't care a fig what the people may think  
But what WILL the governor say!

which was shouted with a deferential jollity towards myself,  
as a governor who had that day done a creditable action, and  
proved himself worthy of all confidence.—Ever, dear Mrs.  
Watson, Most sincerely yours.

‘HOUSEHOLD WORDS,’ *Sunday, Twentieth July, 1851.*

MY DEAR STONE,—I have been considering the great house question since you kindly called yes-  
terday evening, and come to the conclusion that I had better not let it go. I am convinced it is the prudent thing for me to do, and that I am very unlikely to find the same comforts for the rising generation elsewhere, for the same money. Therefore, as Robins no doubt understands that you would come to me yesterday—passing his life as he does amidst every possible phase of such negotiations—I think it hardly worth while to wait for the receipt of his coming letter. If you will take the trouble to call on him in the morning, and offer the £1450, I shall be very much obliged to you. If you will receive from me full power to conclude the purchase (subject of course to my solicitor's approval of the lease), pray do. I give you *carte blanche* to £1500, but I think the £1450 ought to win the day.

I don't make any apologies for thrusting this honour upon you, knowing what a thorough-going old pump you are. Lemon and his wife are coming here, after rehearsal, to a gipsy sort of cold dinner. Time, half-past three. Viands, pickled salmon and cold pigeon-pie. Occupation afterwards, lying on the carpet as a preparation for histrionic strength. Will you come with us from the Hanover Square Rooms?

Ever affectionately.

BROADSTAIRS, KENT, *Seventh October, 1851.*

MY DEAR KNIGHT,—A most excellent Shadow! <sup>1</sup>  
I have sent it up to the printer, and Wills is to send you a proof. Will you look carefully at all

Mr.  
Charles  
Knight.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Charles Knight was writing a series of papers in *Household Words* called ‘Shadows.’



the earlier part, where the use of the past tense instead of the present a little hurts the picturesque effect. I understand each phase of the thing to be *always a thing present before the mind's eye*—a shadow passing before it. Whatever is done, must be *doing*. Is it not so? For example, if I did the Shadow of Robinson Crusoe, I should not say he *was* a boy at Hull when his father lectured him about going to sea, and so forth; but he *is* a boy at Hull. There he is, in that particular Shadow, eternally a boy at Hull; his life to me is a series of shadows, but there is no 'was' in the case. If I choose to go to his manhood, I can. These shadows don't change as realities do. No phase of his existence passes away, if I choose to bring it to this unsubstantial and delightful life, the only death of which, to me, is *my* death, and thus he is immortal to unnumbered thousands. If I am right, will you look at the proof through the first third or half of the papers, and see whether the Factor comes before us in that way? If not, it is merely the alteration of the verb here and there that is requisite.

I cannot say that I derive a comfortable impression of —— from his note, or that I think him easy to be hopefully assisted; but I am almost ashamed of building up any opinion on such slight premises. He writes about his books rather as if he saw his future biography in his mind's eye, with this letter in it. Is it so? or am I a Beast whom Begging-Letter Writers have made out of a Beautiful Prince?

You say you are coming down to look for a place next week. Now, Jerrold says he is coming on Thursday, by the cheap express at half-past twelve, to return with me for the play early on Monday morning. Can't you make that a holiday too? I have promised him our only spare bed, but we 'll find you a bed hard by, and shall be delighted 'to eat and drink you,' as an American once wrote to me. We will make expeditions to Herne Bay, Canterbury, where not? and drink deep draughts of fresh air. Come! They are beginning to cut the corn. You will never see the country so pretty. If you stay in town these days, you 'll do nothing. Say you 'll come!

Ever affectionately.

BROADSTAIRS, KENT, *Saturday, Twenty-third August, 1851.*

MY DEAR STONE,—A 'dim vision' occurs to me, Mr. Frank Stone. arising out of your note; also presents itself to the brains of my other half.

Supposing you should find, on looking onward, a possibility of your being houseless at Michaelmas, what do you say to using Devonshire Terrace as a temporary encampment? It will not be in its usual order, but we would take care that there should be as much useful furniture of all sorts there, as to render it unnecessary for you to move a stick. If you should think this a convenience, then I should propose to you to pile your furniture in the middle of the rooms at Tavistock House, and go out to Devonshire Terrace two or three weeks *before* Michaelmas, to enable my workmen to commence their operations. This might be to our mutual convenience, and therefore I suggest it. Certainly the sooner I can begin on Tavistock House the better. And possibly your going into Devonshire Terrace might relieve you from a difficulty that would otherwise be perplexing.

I make this suggestion (I need not say to *you*) solely on the chance of its being useful to both of us. If it were merely convenient to me, you know I shouldn't dream of it. Such an arrangement, while it would cost you nothing, would perhaps enable you to get your new house into order comfortably, and do exactly the same thing for me.

Ever affectionately.

BROADSTAIRS, *Sunday, Seventh September, 1851.*

MY DEAR HENRY,—I am in that state of mind Mr. Henry Austin. which you may (once) have seen described in the newspapers as 'bordering on distraction'; the house given up to me, the fine weather going on (soon to break, I daresay), the painting season oozing away, my new book waiting to be born and

NO WORKMEN ON THE PREMISES,

along of my not hearing from you!! I have torn all my hair off, and constantly beat my unoffending family. Wild notions have occurred to me of sending in my own plumber to



do the drains. Then I remember that you have probably written to prepare *your* man, and restrain my audacious hand. Then Stone presents himself, with a most exasperatingly mysterious visage, and says that a rat has appeared in the kitchen, and it's his opinion (Stone's, not the rat's) that the drains want 'compo-ing'; for the use of which explicit language I could fell him without remorse. In my horrible desire to 'compo' everything, the very postman becomes my enemy because he brings no letter from you; and, in short, I don't see what's to become of me unless I hear from you to-morrow, which I have not the least expectation of doing.

Going over the house again, I have materially altered the plans—abandoned conservatory and front balcony—decided to make Stone's painting-room the drawing-room (it is nearly six inches higher than the room below), to carry the entrance passage right through the house to a back door leading to the garden, and to reduce the once intended drawing-room—now school-room—to a manageable size, making a door of communication between the new drawing-room and the study. Curtains and carpets, on a scale of awful splendour and magnitude, are already in preparation, and still—still—

NO WORKMEN ON THE PREMISES.

To pursue this theme is madness. Where are you? When are you coming home? Where is THE man who is to do the work? Does he know that an army of artificers must be turned in at once, and the whole thing finished out of hand? O rescue me from my present condition. Come up to the scratch, I entreat and implore you!

I send this to Lætitia to forward,

Being, as you well know why,  
Completely floored by N. W., I  
*Sleep.*

I hope you may be able to read this. My state of mind does not admit of coherence. Ever affectionately.

PS.—NO WORKMEN ON THE PREMISES!

Ha! ha! ha! (I am laughing demoniacally.)

## EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO MR. STONE

*Eighth September, 1851.*

You never saw such a sight as the sands between this and Margate presented yesterday. This day <sup>Mr. Frank Stone.</sup> fortnight a steamer laden with cattle going from Rotterdam to the London market, was wrecked on the Goodwin—on which occasion, by the bye, the coming in at night of our Salvage Luggers laden with dead cattle, which were hoisted up upon the pier, where they lay in heaps, was a most picturesque and striking sight. The sea since Wednesday has been very rough, blowing in straight upon the land. Yesterday, the shore was strewn with hundreds of oxen, sheep, and pigs (and with bushels upon bushels of apples,) in every state and stage of decay—burst open, rent asunder, lying with their stiff hoofs in the air, or with their great ribs yawning like the wrecks of ships—tumbled and beaten out of shape, and yet with a horrible sort of humanity about them. Hovering among these carcasses was every kind of water-side plunderer, pulling the horns out, getting the hides off, chopping the hoofs with poleaxes, etc. etc., attended by no end of donkey carts, and spectral horses with scraggy necks, galloping wildly up and down as if there was something maddening in the stench. I never beheld such a demoniacal business!

Very faithfully yours.

*BROADSTAIRS, Monday, Eighth September, 1851.*

MY DEAR HENRY,—Your letter, received this <sup>Mr. Henry Austin.</sup> morning, has considerably allayed the anguish of my soul. Our letters crossed, of course, as letters under such circumstances always do.

I am perpetually wandering (in fancy) up and down the house<sup>1</sup> and tumbling over the workmen; when I feel that they are gone to dinner I become low, when I look forward to their total abstinence on Sundays, I am wretched. The gravy at dinner has a taste of glue in it. I smell paint in the sea. Phantom lime attends me all the day long. I dream

<sup>1</sup> Tavistock House.



that I am a carpenter and can't partition off the hall. I frequently dance (with a distinguished company) in the drawing-room, and fall in the kitchen for want of a pillar.

A great to-do here. A steamer lost on the Goodwins yesterday, and our men bringing in no end of dead cattle and sheep. I stood a supper for them last night, to the unbounded gratification of Broadstairs. They came in from the wreck very wet and tired, and very much disconcerted by the nature of their prize—which, I suppose, after all, will have to be recommitted to the sea, when the hides and tallow are secured. One lean-faced boatman murmured, when they were all ruminative over the bodies as they lay on the pier: 'Couldn't sassages be made on it?' but retired in confusion shortly afterwards, overwhelmed by the execrations of the bystanders. Ever affectionately.

PS.—Sometimes I think ——'s bill will be too long to be added up until Babbage's calculating-machine shall be improved and finished. Sometimes that there is not paper enough ready made, to carry it over and bring it forward upon.

I dream, also, of the workmen every night. They make faces at me, and won't do anything.

BROADSTAIRS, *Sunday, Twenty-first September, 1851.*

Mr. Henry  
Austin.

MY DEAR HENRY,—It is quite clear we could do nothing else with the drains than what you have done. Will it be at all a heavy item in the estimate?

If there be the *least* chance of a necessity for the pillar, let us have it. Let us dance in peace, whatever we do, and only go into the kitchen by the staircase. Have they cut the door between the drawing-room and the study yet? The foreman will let Shoolbred know when the feat is accomplished.

Oh! and did you tell him of another brass ventilator in the dining-room, opening into the dining-room flue?

I am getting a complete set of a certain distinguished author's works prepared for a certain distinguished architect, which I hope he will accept, as a slight, though very inade-

quate, etc. etc.; affectionate, etc.; so heartily and kindly taking so much interest, etc. etc. Ever affectionately.

BROADSTAIRS, *Sunday, Twenty-eighth September, 1851.*

MY DEAR MISS EDEN,—Many thanks for the <sup>The Hon. Miss Eden.<sup>1</sup></sup> grapes; which must have come from the identical vine a man ought to sit under. They were a prodigy of excellence.

I have been concerned to hear of your indisposition, but thought the best thing I could do, was to make no formal calls when you were really ill. I have been suffering myself from another kind of malady—a severe, spasmodic, house-buying-and-repairing attack—which has left me extremely weak and all but exhausted. The seat of the disorder has been the pocket.

I had the kindest of notes from the kindest of men this morning, and am going to see him on Wednesday. Of course I mean the Duke of Devonshire. Can I take anything to Chatsworth for you? Very faithfully yours.

BROADSTAIRS, KENT, *Seventh October, 1851.*

MY DEAR HENRY,—O! O! O! D—— the <sup>Mr. Henry Austin.</sup> Pantehnicon. O!

I will be at Tavistock House at twelve on Saturday, and then will wait for you until I see you. If we return together—as I hope we shall—our express will start at half-past four, and we ought to dine (somewhere about Temple Bar) at three.

The infamous —— says the stoves shall be fixed to-morrow row.

Oh! if this were to last long; the distraction of the new book, the whirling of the story through one's mind, escorted by workmen, the imbecility, the wild necessity of beginning to write, the not being able to do so, the, O! I should go——  
O! Ever affectionately.

<sup>1</sup> Miss Eden had a cottage at Broadstairs, and was residing there at this time.



BROADSTAIRS, KENT, *Tenth October, 1851.*

## ON THE DEATH OF HER MOTHER

Miss Mary  
Boyle.

MY DEAR MISS BOYLE,—Your remembrance at such a time—not thrown away upon me, trust me—is a sufficient assurance that you know how truly I feel towards you, and with what an earnest sympathy I must think of you now.

God be with you! There is indeed nothing terrible in such a death, nothing that we would undo, nothing that we may remember otherwise than with deeply thankful, though with softened hearts.

Kate sends you her affectionate love. I enclose a note from Georgina. Pray give my kindest remembrances to your brother Cavendish, and believe me now and ever,

Faithfully your Friend.

‘HOUSEHOLD WORDS’ OFFICE,  
*Wednesday Evening, Twenty-second October, 1851.*

Mr. Eeles.

MY DEAR MR. EELES,—I send you the list I have made for the book-backs. I should like the *History of a Short Chancery Suit* to come at the bottom of one recess, and the *Catalogue of Statues of the Duke of Wellington* at the bottom of the other. If you should want more titles, and will let me know how many, I will send them to you.

Faithfully yours.

## LIST OF IMITATION BOOK-BACKS

*Tavistock House, 1851.*

Five Minutes in China. 3 vols.	Captain Cook's Life of Savage.
Forty Winks at the Pyramids. 2 vols.	2 vols.
Abernathy on the Constitution. 2 vols.	A Carpenter's Bench of Bishops. 2 vols.
Mr. Green's Overland Mail. 2 vols.	Toots' Universal Letter-Writer. 2 vols.
Downeaster's Complete Calculator.	Orson's Art of Etiquette.
History of the Middling Ages. 6 vols.	Commonplace Book of the Oldest Inhabitant. 2 vols.
	Growler's Gruffiology, with Appendix. 4 vols.

Jonah's Account of the Whale.	The Books of Moses and Sons.
Captain Parry's Virtues of Cold Tar.	2 vols.
Kant's Ancient Humbugs. 10 vols.	Burke (of Edinburgh) on the Sublime and Beautiful. 2 vols.
Bowwowdom. A Poem.	Teazer's Commentaries.
The Quarrelly Review. 4 vols.	King Henry the Eighth's Evi- dences of Christianity. 5 vols.
The Gunpowder Magazine. 4 vols.	Miss Biffin on Deportment.
Steele. By the Author of 'Ion.'	Morrison's Pills Progress. 2 vols.
The Art of Cutting the Teeth.	Lady Godiva on the Horse.
Matthew's Nursery Songs. 2 vols.	Munchausen's Modern Mira- cles. 4 vols.
Paxton's Bloomers. 5 vols.	Richardson's Show of Dra- matic Literature. 12 vols.
On the Use of Mercury by the Ancient Poets.	Hansard's Guide to Refreshing Sleep. As many volumes as possible.
Drowsy's Recollections of Nothing. 3 vols.	
Heavyside's Conversations with Nobody. 3 vols.	

OFFICE OF 'HOUSEHOLD WORDS,' *Saturday, Twenty-fifth October, 1851.*

MY DEAR HENRY,—On the day of our depart-  
ure, I thought we were going—backward—at a  
most triumphant pace; but yesterday we rather recovered.  
The painters still mislaid their brushes every five minutes,  
and chiefly whistled in the intervals; and the carpenters (es-  
pecially the Panttechnicon) continued to look sideways with  
one eye down pieces of wood, as if they were absorbed in  
the contemplation of the perspective of the Thames Tunnel,  
and had entirely relinquished the vanities of this transitory  
world; but still there was an improvement, and it is con-  
firmed to-day. White lime is to be seen in kitchens, the  
bath-room is gradually resolving itself from an abstract idea  
into a fact—youthful, extremely youthful, but a fact. The  
drawing-room encourages no hope whatever, nor the study.  
Staircase painted. Irish labourers howling in the school-  
room, but I don't know why. I see nothing. Gardener vig-  
orously lopping the trees, and really letting in the light and  
air. Foreman sweet-tempered but uneasy. Inimitable hov-

Mr. Henry  
Austin.



ering gloomily through the premises all day, with an idea that a little more work is done when he flits, bat-like, through the rooms, than when there is no one looking on. Catherine all over paint. Mister McCann, encountering Inimitable in doorways, fades obsequiously into areas, and there encounters him again, and swoons with confusion. Several reams of blank paper constantly spread on the drawing-room walls, and sliced off again, which looks like insanity. Two men still clinking at the new stair-rails. I think they must be learning a tune; I cannot make out any other object in their proceedings.

Since writing the above, I have been up there again, and found the young paper-hanger putting on his slippers, and looking hard at the walls of the servant's room at the top of the house, as if he meant to paper it one of these days. May Heaven prosper his intentions!

Ever affectionately.

CLIFTON, *Thirteenth November*, 1851.

Mrs.  
Charles  
Dickens.

MY DEAREST KATE,—I have just received your second letter, and am quite delighted to find that all is going on so vigorously, and that you are in such a methodical, business-like, and energetic state. I shall come home by the express on Saturday morning, and shall hope to be at home between eleven and twelve.

We had a noble night last night. The room (which is the largest but one in England) was crammed in every part. The effect of from thirteen to fourteen hundred people, all well dressed, and all seated in one unbroken chamber, except that the floor rose high towards the end of the hall, was most splendid, and we never played to a better audience. The enthusiasm was prodigious; the place delightful for speaking in; no end of gas; another hall for a dressing-room; an immense stage; and every possible convenience. We were all thoroughly pleased, I think, with the whole thing, and it was a very great and striking success. To-morrow-night, having the new *Hardman*, I am going to try the play with all kinds of cuts, taking out, among other things, some half-dozen printed pages of *Will's Coffee House*.

We are very pleasant and cheerful. They are all going to Matthew Davenport Hill's to lunch this morning, and to see some woods about six or seven miles off. I prefer being quiet, and shall go out at my leisure and call on Elliott. We are very well lodged and boarded, and living high up on the Downs, are quite out of the filth of Bristol.

I saw old Landor at Bath, who has bronchitis. When he was last in town, 'Kenyon drove him about, by God, half the morning, under a most damnable pretence of taking him to where Walter was at school, and they never found the confounded house!' He had in his pocket on that occasion a souvenir for Walter in the form of a Union shirt-pin, which is now in my possession, and shall be duly brought home.

I am tired enough, and shall be glad when to-morrow night is over. We expect a very good house. Forster came up to town after the performance last night, and promised to report to you that all was well. Jerrold is in extraordinary force. I don't think I ever knew him so humorous. And this is all my news, which is quite enough. I am continually thinking of the house in the midst of all the bustle, but I trust it with such confidence to you that I am quite at my ease about it.—Ever, my dearest Kate,

Most affectionately yours.

PS.—I forgot to say that Topham has suddenly come out as a juggler, and swallows candles, and does wonderful things with the poker very well indeed, but with a bashfulness and embarrassment extraordinarily ludicrous.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE, *Seventeenth November, 1851.*

DEAR MR. EELES,—I must thank you for the Mr. Eeles.  
 admirable manner in which you have done the  
 book-backs in my room. I feel personally obliged to you,  
 I assure you, for the interest you have taken in my whim,  
 and the promptitude with which you have completely carried  
 it out. Faithfully yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Thursday Afternoon, Fifth December, 1851.*

MY DEAR MRS. GASKELL,—I write in great Mrs.  
 haste to tell you that Mr. Wills, in the utmost Gaskell.



consternation, has brought me your letter, just received (four o'clock), and that it is *too late* to recall your tale. I was so delighted with it that I put it first in the number (not hearing of any objection to my proposed alteration by return of post), and the number is now made up in the printer's hands. I cannot possibly take the tale out—it has departed from me.

I am truly concerned for this, but I hope you will not blame me for what I have done in perfect good faith. Any recollection of me from your pen cannot (as I think you know) be otherwise than truly gratifying to me; but with my name on every page of *Household Words*, there would be—or at least I should feel—an impropriety in so mentioning myself. I was particular, in changing the author, to make it 'Hood's *Poems*' in the most important place—I mean where the captain is killed—and I hope and trust that the substitution will not be any serious drawback to the paper in any eyes but yours. I would do anything rather than cause you a minute's vexation arising out of what has given me so much pleasure, and I sincerely beseech you to think better of it, and not to fancy that any shade has been thrown on your charming writing, by

The unfortunate but innocent.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE, *Sixteenth December*, 1851.

Mr. Austen  
Henry  
Layard.

MY DEAR LAYARD,—I want to renew your recollection of 'the last time we parted'—not at Wapping Old Stairs, but at Miss Coutts'—when we vowed to be more intimate after all nations should have departed from Hyde Park, and I should be able to emerge from my cave on the seashore.

Can you, and will you, be in town on Wednesday, the last day of the present old year? If yes, will you dine with us at a quarter after six, and see the New Year in with such extemporaneous follies of an exploded sort (in genteel society) as may occur to us? Both Mrs. Dickens and I would be really delighted if this should find you free to give us the pleasure of your society.—Believe me always,

Very faithfully yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Sunday, Twenty-first December, 1851.*

MY DEAR MRS. GASKELL,—If you were not the most suspicious of women, always looking for soft sawder in the purest metal of praise, I should call your paper delightful, and touched in the tenderest and most delicate manner. Being what you are, I confine myself to the observation that I have called it ‘A Love Affair at Cranford,’ and sent it off to the printer. Mrs.  
Gaskell.

Faithfully yours ever.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Twenty-sixth December, 1851.*

MY DEAR CUNNINGHAM,—About the three papers. Mr. Peter  
Cunning-  
ham.

1st. With Mr. Plowman of Oxford, Wills will communicate.

2nd. (Now returned.) I have seen, in nearly the same form, before. The list of names is overwhelming.

3rd. I am not at all earnest in the Savage matter; firstly, because I think so tremendous a vagabond never could have obtained an honest living in any station of existence or at any period of time; and secondly, because I think it of the highest importance that such an association as our Guild should not appear to resent upon society the faults of individuals who were flagrantly impracticable.

At its best, it is liable to that suspicion, as all such efforts have been on the part of many jealous persons, to whom it *must* look for aid. And any step that in the least encourages it is one of a fatal kind.

I do *not* think myself, but this is merely an individual opinion, that Savage *was* a man of genius, or that anything of his writing would have attracted much notice but for the bastard’s reference to his mother. For these reasons combined, I should not be inclined to add my subscription of two guineas to yours, unless the inscription were altered as I have altered it in pencil. But in that case I should be very glad to respond to your suggestion, and to snuff out all my smaller disinclination.

Faithfully yours ever.



1852

## NARRATIVE

IN the summer of this year, Charles Dickens hired a house at Dover for three months, whither he went with his family. At the end of this time he sent his children and servants back to Tavistock House, and crossed over to Boulogne, with his wife and sister-in-law, to inspect that town and its neighbourhood, with a view of making it his summer quarters in the following year. Many amateur performances were given in the provinces in aid of the fund for the Guild of Literature and Art; Charles Dickens, as usual, taking the whole management on his own shoulders.

In March, the first number of *Bleak House* appeared, and he was at work on this book all through the year, as well as being constantly occupied with his editorship of *Household Words*.

We have, in the letters for this year, Charles Dickens' first to Lord John Russell (afterwards the Earl Russell); a friend whom he held in the highest estimation, and to whom he was always grateful for many personal kindnesses. We have also an interesting letter to Mr. Wilkie Collins, with whom he became most intimately associated in literary work. The affectionate friendship he had for him, the high value in which he held him as a brother-artist, are constantly expressed in Charles Dickens' own letters to Mr. Collins, and his letters to other friends.

'Those gallant men' (in the letter to Mr. J. Crofton Croker) had reference to an antiquarian club, called the Noviomagians, who were about to give a dinner in honour of Sir Edward Belcher and Captain Kellett, the officers in command of the Arctic Exploring Expedition, to which Charles Dickens was also invited. Mr. Crofton Croker was the president of this club, and to denote his office it was customary to put on a cocked hat after dinner.

The 'lost character' he writes of in a letter to Mrs. Watson, refers to two different decipherings of his handwriting; this sort of study being in fashion then, and he and his

friends at Rockingham Castle deriving much amusement from it.

The letter, dated twenty-sixth March, to Mr. (afterwards Dr.) James Bower Harrison (a cousin of Mr. Harrison Ainsworth, and the writer of many scientific works), was on the subject of an article, written by that gentleman for *Household Words*, on the injurious effects of the manufacture of lucifer matches on the employed.

The letter dated ninth July was in answer to an anonymous correspondent, who wrote to him as follows: 'I venture to trespass on your attention with one serious query, touching a sentence in the last number of *Bleak House*. Do the supporters of Christian missions to the heathen really deserve the attack that is conveyed in the sentence about Jo' seated in his anguish on the doorstep of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts? The allusion is severe, but is it just? Are such boys as Jo' neglected? What are ragged schools, town missions, and many of those societies I regret to see sneered at in the last number of *Household Words*?'

Our last letter in this year, to Mr. G. Linnæus Banks, was in acknowledgment of one from him on the subject of a proposed public dinner to Charles Dickens, to be given by the people of Birmingham, when they were also to present him with a salver and a diamond ring. The dinner was given in the following year, and the ring and salver (the latter an artistic specimen of Birmingham ware) were duly presented by Mr. Banks, who acted as honorary secretary, in the names of the subscribers, at the rooms of the Birmingham Fine Arts Association. Mr. Banks, and the artist, Mr. J. C. Walker, were the originators of this demonstration.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Thirty-first January, 1852.*

MY DEAR MACREADY,—If the 'taxes on knowl-  
edge' mean the stamp duty, the paper duty, and  
the advertisement duty, they seem to me to be unnecessarily  
confounded, and unfairly too.

Mr. W. C.  
Macready.

I have already declined to sign a petition for the removal of the stamp duty on newspapers. I think the reduced duty



is some protection to the public against the rash and hasty launching of blackguard newspapers. I think the newspapers are made extremely accessible to the poor man at present, and that he would not derive the least benefit from the abolition of the stamp. It is not at all clear to me, supposing he wants the *Times* a penny cheaper, that he would get it a penny cheaper if the tax were taken off. If he supposes he would get in competition two or three new journals as good to chose from, he is mistaken; not knowing the immense resources and the gradually perfective machinery necessary to the production of such a journal. It appears to me to be a fair tax enough, very little in the way of individuals, not embarrassing to the public in its mode of being levied, and requiring some small consideration and pauses from the American kind of newspaper projectors. Further, a committee has reported in favour of the repeal, and the subject may be held to need no present launching.

The repeal of the paper duty would benefit the producers of periodicals immensely. It would make a very large difference to me, in the case of such a journal as *Household Words*. But the gain to the public would be very small. It would not make the difference of enabling me, for example, to reduce the price of *Household Words*, by its fractional effect upon a copy, or to increase the quantity of matter. I might, in putting the difference into my pocket, improve the quality of the paper a little, but not one man in a thousand would notice it. It *might* (though I am not sure even of this) remove the difficulties in the way of a deserving periodical with a small sale. Charles Knight holds that it would. But the case, on the whole, appeared to me so slight, when I went to Downing Street with a deputation on the subject, that I said (in addressing the Chancellor of the Exchequer) I could not honestly maintain it for a moment as against the soap duty, or any other pressing on the mass of the poor.

The advertisement duty has this preposterous anomaly, that a footman in want of a place pays as much in the way of tax for the expression of his want, as Professor Holloway pays for the whole list of his miraculous cures.

But I think, at this time especially, there is so much to be considered in the necessity the country will be under of having money, and the necessity of justice it is always under, to consider the physical and moral wants of the poor man's home, as to justify a man in saying: 'I must wait a little, all taxes are more or less objectionable, and so no doubt are these, but we must have some; and I have not made up my mind that all these things that are mixed up together *are* taxes on knowledge in reality.'

We are always with you in spirit, and always talking about you. I am obliged to conclude very hastily, being beset to-day with business engagements. Saw the lecture and was delighted; thought the idea admirable. Again, loves upon loves to dear Mrs. Macready and to Miss Macready also, and Kate and all the house. I saw — play (O Heaven!) *Macbeth*, the other night, in three hours and fifty minutes, which is quick, I think.

Ever and always affectionately.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Sunday Night, Fifteenth February, 1852.*

MY DEAR BULWER,—I left Liverpool at four o'clock this morning, and am so blinded by excitement, gas, and waving hats and handkerchiefs, that I can hardly see to write, but I cannot go to bed without telling you what a triumph we have had. Allowing for the necessarily heavy expenses of all kinds, I believe we can hardly fund less than a Thousand Pounds out of this trip alone. And, more than that, the extraordinary interest taken in the idea of the Guild by 'this grand people of England' down in these vast hives, and the enthusiastic welcome they give it, assure me that we may do what we will if we will only be true and faithful to our design. There is a social recognition of it which I cannot give you the least idea of. I sincerely believe that we have the ball at our feet, and may throw it up to the very Heaven of Heavens. And I don't speak for myself alone, but for all our people, and not least of all for Forster, who has been absolutely stunned by the tremendous earnestness of these great places.

Sir Edward  
Bulwer  
Lytton.

To tell you (especially after your affectionate letter) what



I would have given to have had you there would be idle. But I can most seriously say that all the sights of the earth turned pale in my eyes, before the sight of three thousand people with one heart among them, and no capacity in them, in spite of all their efforts, of sufficiently testifying to you how they believe you to be right, and feel that they cannot do enough to cheer you on. They understood the play (*far better acted by this time than ever you have seen it*) as well as you do. They allowed nothing to escape them. They rose up, when it was over, with a perfect fury of delight, and the Manchester people sent a requisition after us to Liverpool to say that if we will go back there in May, when we act at Birmingham (as of course we shall) they will joyfully undertake to fill the Free Trade Hall again. Among the Tories of Liverpool the reception was equally enthusiastic. We played, two nights running, to a hall crowded to the roof—more like the opera at Genoa or Milan than anything else I can compare it to. We dined at the Town Hall magnificently, and it made no difference in the response. I said what we were quietly determined to do (when the Guild was given as the toast of the night), and really they were so noble and generous in their encouragement that I should have been more ashamed of myself than I hope I ever shall be, if I could have felt conscious of having ever for a moment faltered in the work.

I will answer for Birmingham—for any great working town to which we chose to go. We have won a position for the idea which years upon years of labour could not have given it. I believe its worldly fortunes have been advanced in this last week fifty years at least. I feebly express to you what Forster (who couldn't be at Liverpool, and has not those shouts ringing in his ears) has felt from the moment he set foot in Manchester. Believe me we may carry a perfect fiery cross through the North of England, and over the Border, in this cause, if need be—not only to the enrichment of the cause, but to the lasting enlistment of the people's sympathy.

I have been so happy in all this that I could have cried on the shortest notice any time since Tuesday. And I do be-

lieve that our whole body would have gone to the North Pole with me if I had shown them good reason for it.

I hope I am not so tired but that you may be able to read this. I have been at it almost incessantly, day and night for a week, and I am afraid my handwriting suffers. But in all other respects I am only a giant refreshed.

We meet next Saturday you recollect? Until then, and ever afterwards, Believe me, heartily yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Third March*, 1852.

MY DEAR MRS. CLARKE,—It is almost an impertinence to tell you how delightful your flowers were to me; for you who thought of that beautiful and delicately-timed token of sympathy and remembrance, must know it very well already.

Mrs.  
Cowden  
Clarke.

I do assure you that I have hardly ever received anything with so much pleasure in all my life. They are not faded yet—are on my table here—but never can fade out of my remembrance.

I should be less than a Young Gas, and more than an old Manager—that commemorative portfolio is here too—if I could relieve my heart of half that it could say to you. All my house are my witnesses that you have quite filled it, and this note is my witness that I can *not* empty it.

Ever faithfully and gratefully your Friend.

TAVISTOCK, HOUSE, *Sixth March*, 1852.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have the greatest interest in those gallant men, and should have been delighted to dine in their company. I feel truly obliged to you for your kind remembrance on such an occasion.

Mr. J.  
Crofton  
Croker.

But I am engaged to Lord Lansdowne on Wednesday, and can only drink to them in spirit, which I have often done when they have been farther off.

I hope you will find occasion to put on your cocked hat, that they may see how terrific and imposing ‘a fore-and-after’ can be made on shore.

Faithfully yours always.



## 320 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

LONDON, TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Twenty-sixth March*, 1852.

Mr. James  
Bower  
Harrison.

DEAR SIR,—I beg to thank you for your interesting pamphlet, and to add that I shall be very happy to accept an article from you on the subject for *Household Words*. I should already have suggested to you that I should have great pleasure in receiving contributions from one so well and peculiarly qualified to treat of many interesting subjects, but that I felt a delicacy in encroaching on your other occupations. Will you excuse my remarking that to make an article on this particular subject useful, it is essential to address the employed as well as the employers? In the case of the Sheffield grinders the difficulty was, for many years, not with the masters, but the men. Painters who use white lead are with the greatest difficulty persuaded to be particular in washing their hands, and I daresay that I need not remind you that one could not generally induce domestic servants to attend to the commonest sanitary principles in their work without absolutely forcing them to experience their comfort and convenience.—Dear Sir,

Very faithfully yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Sixth April*, 1852.

The Hon.  
Mrs.  
Watson.

MY DEAR MRS. WATSON,—My 'lost character' was one of those awful documents occasionally to be met with, which WILL be everywhere. It glared upon me from every drawer I had, fell out of books, lurked under keys, hid in empty inkstands, got into portfolios, frightened me by inscrutably passing into locked despatch-boxes, and was not one character, but a thousand. This was when I didn't want it. I look for it this morning, and it is nowhere! Probably will never be beheld again.

But it was very unlike this one; and there is no doubt that when these ventures come out good, it is only by lucky chance and coincidence. She never mentioned my love of order before, and it is so remarkable (being almost a *disorder*), that she ought to have fainted with surprise when my handwriting was first revealed to her.

I was very sorry to leave Rockingham the other day, and came away in quite a melancholy state. The Birmingham

people were very active; and the Shrewsbury gentry quite transcendent. I hope we shall have a very successful and dazzling trip. It is delightful to me to think of your coming to Birmingham; and, by the bye, if you will tell me in the previous week what hotel accommodation you want, Mr. Wills will look to it with the greatest pleasure.

Your bookseller ought to be cashiered. I suppose 'he' (as Rogers calls everybody's husband) went out hunting with the idea of diverting his mind from dwelling on its loss. Abortive effort!—Ever, dear Mrs. Watson,

Most faithfully yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Twenty-ninth June, 1852.*

MY DEAR KNIGHT,—A thousand thanks for the Shadow, which is charming. May you often go (out of town) and do likewise!

Mr.  
Charles  
Knight.

I dined with Charles Kemble, yesterday, to meet Emil Devrient, the German actor. He said (Devrient is my antecedent) that Ophelia *spoke* the snatches of ballads in their German version of *Hamlet*, because they didn't know the airs. Tom Taylor said that you had published the airs in your *Shakespeare*. I said that if it were so, I knew you would be happy to place them at the German's service. If you have got them and will send them to me, I will write to Devrient (who knows no English) a French explanation and reminder of the circumstance, and will tell him that you responded like a man and a—I was going to say publisher, but you are nothing of the sort, except as Tonson.<sup>1</sup> Then indeed you are every inch a pub.!

Ever affectionately.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Wednesday, Thirtieth June, 1852.*

MY DEAR LORD,—I am most truly obliged to you for your kind note, and for your so generously thinking of me in the midst of your many occupations. I do assure you that your ever ready consid-

The  
Lord John  
Russell.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Charles Knight played the part of Jacob Tonson in *Not So Bad as We Seem*.



eration had already attached me to you in the warmest manner, and made me very much your debtor. I thank you unaffectedly and very earnestly, and am proud to be held in your remembrance.—Believe me always,

Yours faithfully and obliged.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE,  
*Ninth July, 1852.*

Anony-  
mous  
Corre-  
spondent.

SIR,—I have received your letter of yesterday's date, and shall content myself with a brief reply.

There was a long time during which benevolent societies were spending immense sums on missions abroad, when there was no such thing as a ragged school in England, or any kind of associated endeavour to penetrate to those horrible domestic depths in which such schools are now to be found, and where they were, to my most certain knowledge, neither placed nor discovered by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts.

If you think the balance between the home mission and the foreign mission justly held in the present time, I do not. I abstain from drawing the strange comparison that might be drawn between the sums even now expended in endeavours to remove the darkest ignorance and degradation from our very doors, because I have some respect for mistakes that may be founded in a sincere wish to do good. But I present a general suggestion of the still-existing anomaly (in such a paragraph as that which offends you), in the hope of inducing some people to reflect on this matter, and to adjust the balance more correctly. I am decidedly of opinion that the two works, the home and the foreign, are *not* conducted with an equal hand, and that the home claim is by far the stronger and the more pressing of the two.

Indeed, I have very grave doubts whether a great commercial country, holding communication with all parts of the world, can better Christianise the benighted portions of it than by the bestowal of its wealth and energy on the making of good Christians at home, and on the utter removal of neglected and untaught childhood from its streets, before it wanders elsewhere. For, if it steadily persists in this work,

working downward to the lowest, the travellers of all grades whom it sends abroad will be good, exemplary, practical missionaries, instead of undoers of what the best professed missionaries can do.

These are my opinions, founded, I believe, on some knowledge of facts and some observation. If I could be scared out of them, let me add in all good humour, by such easily-impressed words as 'antichristian' or 'irreligious,' I should think that I deserved them in their real signification.

I have referred in vain to page 312 of *Household Words* for the sneer to which you call my attention. Nor have I, I assure you, the least idea where else it is to be found.—I am,  
Sir, Your faithful Servant.

10 CAMDEN CRESCENT, DOVER, *Twenty-second July*, 1852.

MY DEAR MARY,—This is indeed a noble letter. <sup>Miss Mary Boyle.</sup> The description of the family is quite amazing. I *must* return it myself to say that I have appreciated it.

I am going to do *Used Up* at Manchester on the Second of September. O, think of that! With another Mary!!! How can I ever say, 'Dear Joe, if you like!' The voice may fully frame the falsehood, but the heart—the heart, Mr. Wurzel—will have no part in it.

My dear Mary, you do scant justice to Dover. It is not quite a place to my taste, being too bandy (I mean musical, no reference to its legs), and infinitely too genteel. But the sea is very fine, and the walks are quite remarkable. There are two ways of going to Folkestone, both lovely and striking in the highest degree; and there are heights, and downs, and country roads, and I don't know what, everywhere.

To let you into a secret, I am not quite sure that I ever did like, or ever shall like, anything quite so well as *Copperfield*. But I foresee, I think, some very good things in *Bleak House*. I shouldn't wonder if they were the identical things that D'Israeli sees looming in the distance. I behold them in the months ahead and weep.

Watson seemed, when I saw him last, to be holding on as by a sheet-anchor to theatricals at Christmas. Then, O rapture! but be still, my fluttering heart.



## 324 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

This is one of what I call my wandering days before I fall to work. I seem to be always looking at such times for something I have not found in life, but may possibly come to a few thousands of years hence, in some other part of some other system. God knows. At all events I won't put your pastoral little pipe out of tune by talking about it. I'll go and look for it on the Canterbury road among the hop-gardens and orchards.—Ever faithfully your Friend, JOE.

10 CAMDEN CRESCENT, DOVER, *Sunday, First August, 1852.*

Mr. Charles  
Knight.

MY DEAR KNIGHT,—I don't see why you should go to the Ship, and I won't stand it. The state apartment will be occupied by the Duke of Middlesex <sup>1</sup> (whom I think you know), but we can easily get a bed for you hard by. Therefore you will please to drive here next Saturday evening. Our regular dinner hour is half-past five. If you are later, you will find something ready for you.

If you go on in that way about your part, I shall think you want to play Mr. Gabblewig. Your rôle, though a small one on the stage, is a large one off it; and no man is more important to the Guild, both on and off.

My dear friend Watson! Dead after an illness of four days. He dined with us this day three weeks. I loved him as my heart, and cannot think of him without tears.

Ever affectionately.

DOVER, *Fifth August, 1852.*

Mr. Mark  
Lemon.

MY DEAR MARK,—Poor dear Watson was dead when the paragraph in the paper appeared. He was buried in his own church yesterday. Last Sunday three weeks (the day before he went abroad) he dined with us, and was quite well and happy. She has come home, is at Rockingham with the children, and does not weakly desert his grave, but sets up her rest by it from the first. He had been wandering in his mind a little before his death, but recovered consciousness, and fell asleep (she says) quite gently and peacefully in her arms.

<sup>1</sup> The character played by Mr. Frank Stone in Sir E. B. Lytton's comedy.



# Philharmonic Hall, Liverpool.

Manager, Mr. CHARLES DICKENS, Tavistock House, Tavistock Square, in the County of Middlesex.

On **FRIDAY EVENING, SEPTEMBER 3rd, 1862,**  
**THE AMATEUR COMPANY**

## GUILD OF LITERATURE & ART;

To encourage Life Assurance and other Provident Habits among Authors and Artists; to render such assistance to both as shall never compromise their independence; and to found a new Institution where honourable rest from arduous labour shall still be associated with the discharge of congenial duties;

WILL HAVE THE HONOR OF PRESENTING

(THIS BEING THEIR LAST NIGHT OF PERFORMANCE,  
THE PETITE COMEDY, IN TWO ACTS; OR

# USED UP.

SIR CHARLES COLDSTREAM, BART.	.	.	.	Mr. CHARLES DICKENS
SIR ADONIS LEECH,	.	.	.	Mr. COE
THE HONORABLE TOM SAVILLE,	.	.	.	Mr. JOHN TENNIEL,
WURZEL, (a Farmer)	.	.	.	Mr. F. W. TOPHAM,
JOHN LEONBRACE, (a Blacksmith)	.	.	.	Mr. MARK LEMON,
MR. FENNEL, (a Lawyer)	.	.	.	Mr. AUGUSTUS EGG, A.R.A.
JAMES,	.	.	.	Mr. WILKIE COLLINS,
MARY,	.	.	.	Mrs. HENRY COMPTON.
LADY CLUTTERBUCK.	.	.	.	Mrs. COE.

### SCENERY.

Saloon in Sir Charles Coldstream's House,	.	.	Painted by Mr. PITT,
Distant View of the River,	.	.	" Mr. STANFIELD, R.A.
Interior of an Old Farm House,	.	.	" Mr. PITT.

Previous to the Play the Band will Perform an OVERTURE, composed expressly for this purpose, by Mr. G. COOTE, (Pialet to His Grace the Duke of Devonshire);  
WHO WILL, ON THIS OCCASION, PRESIDE AT THE PIANOFORTE.

To conclude with, (twenty-third time) an original Farce, in One Act, by Mr. CHARLES DICKENS and Mr. MARK LEMON, entitled

## MR. NIGHTINGALE'S DIARY.

Mr. NIGHTINGALE,	.	.	Mr. FRANK STONE, A.R.A.
Mr. GABBLEWIG, (of the Middle Temple)	.	.	
CHARLEY BIT, (a Boots)	.	.	
Mr. POULTER, (a Pedestrian and Cold-Water Drinker)	.	.	Mr. CHARLES DICKENS.
CAPTAIN BLOWER, (an Invalid)	.	.	
A RESPECTABLE FEMALE,	.	.	
A DEAF SEXTON,	.	.	
TIP, (Mr. GABBLEWIG's Tiger)	.	.	Mr. AUGUSTUS EGG, A.R.A.
CHRISTOPHER, (a Charity Boy)	.	.	
SLAP, (professionally Mr. Flormioville—a Country Actor)	.	.	Mr. MARK LEMON.
Mr. TICKLE, (Inventor of the celebrated Compounds)	.	.	
A VIRTUOUS YOUNG PERSON IN THE CONFIDENCE OF "MARIA"	.	.	
LUTHERS, (Landlord of the "Water Lily")	.	.	Mr. WILKIE COLLINS.
ROSINA,	.	.	Miss FANNY YOUNG.
SUSAN,	.	.	Mrs. COE.

The Proscenium by Mr. CRACE. The Theatre constructed by Mr. SLOMAN, Machinist of the Royal Lyceum Theatre.  
The Properties and Appointments by Mr. G. FOSTER. The Costumes by Messrs. NATHAN, of Tickhouson Street.  
Ferrugular, Mr. WILSON. Prompter, Mr. COE.

THE WHOLE PRODUCED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF MR CHARLES DICKENS.

The Local Arrangements under the superintendence of Mr. William Sudlow.

Doors open at Six o'Clock. To commence at exactly Seven o'clock; when the whole of the audience are particularly recommended to be seated.  
Tickets to be had at the Offices of the Philharmonic Society, Exchange Court. Stalls (in the Body of the Hall) and Boxes, 7s. 6d.;  
Gallery Stalls, 5s. 6d.; Gallery Seats, 3s. 6d.

ENTRANCE TO ALL PARTS OF THE HALL FROM HOPE STREET.

A. INZLAND AND CO., PRINTERS, FALM HALL, MARKET STREET, MANCHESTER.



I loved him very much, and God knows he deserved it.

Ever affectionately.

10 CAMDEN CRESCENT, DOVER, *Thursday, Fifth August, 1852.*

The Earl of  
Carlisle.

MY DEAR LORD CARLISLE,—'Peared to me (as Uncle Tom would say) until within these last few days, that I should be able to write to you, joyfully accepting your Saturday's invitation after Newcastle, in behalf of all whom it concerned. But the Sunderland people rushed into the field to propose our acting there on that Saturday, the only possible night. And as it is the concluding Guild expedition, and the Guild has a paramount claim on us, I have been obliged to knock my own inclinations on the head, cut the throat of my own wishes, and bind the Company hand and foot to the Sunderland lieges. I don't mean to tell them now of your invitation until we shall have got out of that country. There might be rebellion. We are staying here for the autumn.

Is there any hope of your repeating your visit to these coasts?

Ever faithfully yours.

10 CAMDEN CRESCENT, DOVER, *Fifth August, 1852.*

#### ON THE DEATH OF MR. WATSON

The Hon.  
Mrs.  
Watson.

MY DEAR, DEAR MRS. WATSON,—I cannot bear to be silent longer, though I know full well—no one better, I think—how your love for him, and your trust in God, and your love for your children will have come to the help of such a nature as yours, and whispered better things than any friendship can, however faithful and affectionate.

We held him so close in our hearts—all of us here—and have been so happy with him, and so used to say how good he was, and what a gentle, generous, noble spirit he had, and how he shone out among commoner men as something so real and genuine, and full of every kind of worthiness, that it has often brought the tears into my eyes to talk of him; we have

been so accustomed to do this when we looked forward to years of unchanged intercourse, that now, when everything but truth goes down into the dust, those recollections which make the sword so sharp pour balm into the wound. And if it be a consolation to us to know the virtues of his character, and the reasons that we had for loving him, O how much greater is your comfort who were so devoted to him, and were the happiness of his life!

We have thought of you every day and every hour; we think of you now in the dear old house, and know how right it is, for his dear children's sake, that you should have bravely set up your rest in the place consecrated by their father's memory, and within the same summer shadows that fall upon his grave. We try to look on, through a few years, and to see the children brightening it, and George a comfort and a pride and an honour to you; and although it is hard to think of what we have lost, we know how something of it will be restored by your example and endeavours, and the blessing that will descend upon them. We know how the time will come when some reflection of that cordial, unaffected, most affectionate presence, which we can never forget, and never would forget if we could—such is God's great mercy—will shine out of your boy's eyes upon you, his best friend and his last consoler, and fill the void there is now.

May God, who has received into His rest through this affliction as good a man as ever I can know and love and mourn for on this earth, be good to you, dear friends, through these coming years! May all those compassionate and hopeful lessons of the great Teacher who shed divine tears for the dead bring their full comfort to you! I have no fear of that, my confidence is certainty.

I cannot write what I wish; I had so many things to say, I seem to have said none. It is so with the remembrances we send. I cannot put them into words.

If you should ever set up a record in the little church, I would try to word it myself, and God knows out of the fulness of my heart, if you should think it well.—My dear Friend,

Yours, with the truest affection and sympathy.



HOTEL DES BAINS, BOULOGNE, *Tuesday Night, Fifth October, 1852.*

ON THE DEATH OF MRS. MACREADY.

Mr. W. C.  
Macready

MY DEAREST MACREADY,—I received your melancholy letter while we were staying at Dover, a few days after it was written; but I thought it best not to write to you until you were at home again, among your dear children.

Its tidings were not unexpected to us, had been anticipated in many conversations, often thought of under many circumstances; but the shock was scarcely lessened by this preparation. The many happy days we have passed together came crowding back; all the old cheerful times arose before us; and the remembrance of what we had loved so dearly and seen under so many aspects—all natural and delightful and affectionate and ever to be cherished—was, how pathetic and touching you know best!

But my dear, dear Macready, this is not the first time you have felt that the recollection of great love and happiness associated with the dead soothes while it wounds. And while I can imagine that the blank beside you may grow wider every day for many days to come, I *know*—I think—that from its depths such comfort will arise as only comes to great hearts like yours, when they can think upon their trials with a steady trust in God.

My dear friend, I have known her so well, have been so happy in her regard, have been so light-hearted with her, have interchanged so many tender remembrances of you with her when you were far away, and have seen her ever so simply and truly anxious to be worthy of you, that I cannot write as I would and as I know I ought. As I would press your hand in your distress, I let this note go from me. I understand your grief, I deeply feel the reason that there is for it, yet in that very feeling find a softening consolation that must spring up a hundred-thousandfold for you. May Heaven prosper it in your breast, and the spirits that have gone before, from the regions of mercy to which they have been called, smooth the path you have to tread alone! Children

are left to you. Your good sister (God bless her!) is by your side. You have devoted friends, and more reasons than most men to be self-reliant and steadfast. Something is gone that never in this world can be replaced, but much is left, and it is a part of her life, her death, her immortality.

Catherine and Georgina, who are with me here, send you their overflowing love and sympathy. We hope that in a little while, and for a little while at least, you will come among us, who have known the happiness of being in this bond with you, and will not exclude us from participation in your past and future.—Ever, my dearest Macready, with unchangeable affection,

Yours in all love and truth.

HOTEL DES BAINS, BOULOGNE, *Tuesday, Twelfth October, 1852.*

H. W.

MY DEAR WILLS,—I have thought of the Christmas number, but not very successfully, because I have been (and still am) constantly occupied with *Bleak House*. I purpose returning home either on Sunday or Monday, as my work permits, and we will, immediately thereafter, dine at the office and talk it over, so that you may get all the men to their work.

Mr. W. H.  
Wills.

The fault of ——'s poem, besides its intrinsic meanness as a composition, is that it goes too glibly with the comfortable ideas (of which we have had a great deal too much in England since the Continental commotions) that a man is to sit down and make himself domestic and meek, no matter what is done to him. It wants a stronger appeal to rulers in general to let men do this, fairly, by governing them well. As it stands, it is at about the tract-mark ('Dairyman's Daughter,' etc.) of political morality, and don't think that it is necessary to write *down* to any part of our audience. I always hold that to be as great a mistake as can be made.

I wish you would mention to Thomas,<sup>1</sup> that I think the

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Moy Thomas, who was at this time one of the regular contributors to *Household Words*.



paper on hops *extremely well done*. He has caught quite the idea we want, and caught it in the best way. In pursuing the bridge subject, I think it would be advisable to look up the *Thames police*. I have a misty notion of some capital papers coming out of it. Will you see to this branch of the tree among the other branches?

MYSELF

To Chapman I will write. My impression is that I shall not subscribe to the Hood monument, as I am not at all favourable to such posthumous honours.

Ever faithfully.

HOTEL DES BAINS, BOULOGNE,  
Wednesday Night, Thirteenth October, 1852.

Mr. W. H.  
Wills.

MY DEAR WILLS,—I am grievously depressed by the number; it is so exceedingly bad. If you have anything else to put first, don't put ——'s paper first. (There is nothing better for a beginning in the number as it stands, but this is very bad.) It is a mistake to think of it as a first article. The article itself is in the main a mistake. Firstly, the subject requires the greatest discretion and nicety of touch. And secondly, it is all wrong and self-contradictory. Nobody can for a moment suppose that 'sporting' amusements are the sports of the PEOPLE; the whole gist of the best part of the description is to show that they are the amusements of a peculiar and limited class. The greater part of them are at a miserable discount (horse-racing excepted, which has been already sufficiently done in *H. W.*), and there is no reason for running amuck at them at all. I have endeavoured to remove much of my objection (and I think have done so), but both in purpose and in any general address, it is as wide of a first article as anything can well be. It would do best in the opening of the number.

About Sunday in Paris there is no kind of doubt. Take it out. Such a thing as that crucifixion, unless it were done in a masterly manner, we have no business to stagger families with. Besides, the name is a comprehensive one, and should

include a quantity of fine matter. Lord bless me, what I could write under that head!

Strengthen the number, pray, by anything good you may have. It is a very dreary business as it stands.

Ever faithfully.

PS.—I want a name for Miss Martineau's paper.

TRIUMPHANT CARRIAGES (OR TRIUMPHAL).

DUBLIN STOUTHEARTEDNESS.

PATIENCE AND PREJUDICE.

Take which you like best.

MONDAY, *Eighteenth October*, 1852.

SIR,—On my return to town I find the letter awaiting me which you did me the favour to address to me, I believe—for it has no date—some days ago. Mr. John  
Watkins.

I have the greatest tenderness for the memory of Hood, as I had for himself. But I am not very favourable to posthumous memorials in the monument way, and I should exceedingly regret to see any such appeal as you contemplate made public, remembering another public appeal that was made and responded to after Hood's death. I think that I best discharge my duty to my deceased friend, and best consult the respect and love with which I remember him, by declining to join in any such public endeavours as that which you (in all generosity and singleness of purpose, I am sure) advance. I shall have a melancholy gratification in privately assisting to place a simple and plain record over the remains of a great writer that should be as modest as he was himself, but I regard any other monument in connection with his mortal resting-place as a mistake.

I am, Sir, your faithful Servant.

OFFICE OF 'HOUSEHOLD WORDS,'

*Tuesday, Nineteenth October*, 1852.

MY DEAR WHITE,—We are now getting our Christmas extra number together, and I think you are the boy to do, if you will, one of the stories. Rev. James  
White.



I propose to give the number some fireside name, and to make it consist entirely of short stories supposed to be told by a family sitting round the fire. *I don't care about their referring to Christmas at all*; nor do I design to connect them together otherwise than by their names, as:

THE GRANDFATHER'S STORY.

THE FATHER'S STORY.

THE DAUGHTER'S STORY.

THE SCHOOLBOY'S STORY.

THE CHILD'S STORY.

THE GUEST'S STORY.

THE OLD NURSE'S STORY.

The grandfather might very well be old enough to have lived in the days of the highwaymen. Do you feel disposed, from fact, fancy, or both, to do a good winter-hearth story of a highwayman? If you do, I embrace you (per post), and throw up a cap I have purchased for the purpose into mid-air.

Think of it and write me a line in reply. We are all well and blooming.

Are you never coming to town any more? Never going to drink port again, metropolitaneously, but *always* with Fielden?<sup>1</sup> Ever faithfully, my dear White.

ATHENÆUM, Monday, Twenty-second November, 1852.

The Hon.  
Mrs.  
Watson.

MY DEAR MRS. WATSON,—Having just now finished my work for the time being, I turn in here in the course of a rainy walk, to have the gratification of writing a few lines to you. If my occupations with this same right hand were less numerous, you would soon be tired of me, I should write to you so often.

You ask Catherine a question about *Bleak House*. Its circulation is half as large again as *Copperfield*! I have just now come to the point I have been patiently working up to in the writing, and I hope it will suggest to you a pretty and affecting thing. In the matter of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, I partly though not entirely agree with Mr. James. No doubt

<sup>1</sup> The Rev. R. Fielden, a clergyman resident at Bonchurch.

a much lower art will serve for the handling of such a subject in fiction, than for a launch on the sea of imagination without such a powerful bark; but there are many points in the book very admirably done. There is a certain St. Clair, a New Orleans gentleman, who seems to me to be conceived with great power and originality. If he had not 'a Grecian outline of face,' which I began to be a little tired of in my earliest infancy, I should think him unexceptionable. He has a sister too, a maiden lady from New England, in whose person the besetting weaknesses and prejudices of the Abolitionists themselves, on the subject of the blacks, are set forth in the liveliest and truest colours, and with the greatest boldness.

I have written for *Household Words* of this next publication-day an article on the State funeral,<sup>1</sup> showing why I consider it altogether a mistake, to be temperately but firmly objected to; which I daresay will make a good many of the admirers of such things highly indignant. It may have right and reason on its side, however, none the less.

Charley and I had a great talk at Dover about his going into the army, when I thought it right to set before him fairly and faithfully the objections to that career, no less than its advantages. The result was that he asked in a very manly way for time to consider. So I appointed to go down to Eton on a certain day at the beginning of this month, and resume the subject. We resumed it accordingly at the White Hart, at Windsor, and he came to the conclusion that he would rather be a merchant, and try to establish some good house of business, where he might find a path perhaps for his younger brothers, and stay at home, and make himself the head of that long, small procession. I was very much pleased with him indeed; he showed a fine sense and a fine feeling in the whole matter. We have arranged, therefore, that he shall leave Eton at Christmas, and go to Germany after the holidays, to become well acquainted with that language, now most essential in such a walk of life as he will probably tread.

And I think this is the whole of my news. We are always talking of you at home. Mary Boyle dined with us a little while ago. You look out, I imagine, on a waste of water.

<sup>1</sup> The great Duke of Wellington's funeral.



When I came from Windsor, I thought I must have made a mistake and got into a boat (in the dark) instead of a railway-carriage. I am ever, with the best and truest wishes of my heart, my dear Mrs. Watson,

Your most affectionate Friend.

OFFICE OF 'HOUSEHOLD WORDS,'  
Monday, Twenty-second November, 1852.

Rev. James  
White.

MY DEAR WHITE,—First and foremost, there is no doubt whatever of your story suiting *Household Words*. It is a very good story indeed, and would be serviceable at any time. I am not quite so clear of its suiting the Christmas number, for this reason. You know what the spirit of the Christmas number is. When I suggested the stories being about a highwayman, I got hold of that idea as being an adventurous one, including various kinds of wrong, expressing a state of society no longer existing among us, and pleasant to hear (therefore) from an old man. Now, your highwayman not being a real highwayman after all, the kind of suitable Christmas interest I meant to awaken in the story is not in it. Do you understand? For an ordinary number it is quite unobjectionable. If you should think of any other idea, narratable by an old man, which you think would strike the chord of the season; and if you should find time to work it out during the short remainder of this month, I should be greatly pleased to have it. In any case this story goes straightway into type.

I think you will find some good going in the next *Bleak House*. I write shortly, having been working my head off.

Ever affectionately yours.

OFFICE OF 'HOUSEHOLD WORDS,'  
Wednesday, First December, 1852.

Mrs.  
Gaskell.

MY DEAR MRS. GASKELL,—I send you the proof of 'The Old Nurse's Story,' with my proposed alteration. I shall be glad to know whether you approve of it. To assist you in your decision, I send you, also enclosed, the original ending. And I have made a line with ink across the last slip but one, where the alteration begins. Of course if

you wish to enlarge, explain, or re-alter, you will do it. Do not keep the proof longer than you can help, as I want to get to press with all despatch. Ever faithfully yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Thursday, Ninth December, 1852.*

MY DEAR WILLS,—I am driven mad by dogs, <sup>Mr. W. H. Wills.</sup> who have taken it into their accursed heads to assemble every morning in the piece of ground opposite, and who have barked this morning *for five hours without intermission*; positively rendering it impossible for me to work, and so making what is really ridiculous quite serious to me. I wish, between this and dinner, you would send John to see if he can hire a gun, with a few caps, some powder, and a few charges of small shot. If you duly commission him with a card, he can easily do it. And if I get those implements up here to-night, I'll be the death of some of them to-morrow morning. Ever faithfully.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Thursday Evening, Ninth December, 1852.*

MY DEAR WHITE,—I hear you are not going to <sup>Rev. James White.</sup> poor Macready's. Now, don't you think it would do you good to come here instead? I say it would, and I ought to know! We can give you everything but a bed (all ours are occupied in consequence of the boys being at home), and shall all be delighted to see you. Leave the bed to us, and we'll find one hard by. I say nothing of the last day of the old year, and the dancing out of that good old worthy that will take place here (for you might like to hear the bells at home); but after the twentieth, I shall be comparatively at leisure, and good for anything or nothing. Don't you consider it your duty to your family to come? I do, and again I say that I ought to know.

Our best love to Mrs. White and Lotty—happily so much better, we rejoice to hear—and all.

So no more at present from

THE INIMITABLE B.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Friday, Seventeenth December, 1852.*

MY DEAR MRS GASKELL,—I received your kind <sup>Mrs. Gaskell.</sup> note yesterday morning with the truest gratification, for I *am* the writer of 'The Child's Story' as well as



of 'The Poor Relation's.' I assure you, you have given me the liveliest and heartiest pleasure by what you say of it.

I don't claim for my ending of 'The Nurse's Story' that it would have made it a bit better. All I can urge in its behalf is, that it is what I should have done myself. But there is no doubt of the story being admirable as it stands, and there is some doubt (I think) whether Forster would have found anything wrong in it, if he had not known of my hammering over the proofs in making up the number, with all the three endings before me.

Ever faithfully yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Monday, Twentieth December, 1852.*

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

MY DEAR COLLINS,—If I did not know that you are likely to have a forbearing remembrance of my occupation, I should be full of remorse for not having sooner thanked you for *Basil*.

Not to play the sage or the critic (neither of which parts, I hope, is at all in my line), but to say what is the friendly truth, I may assure you that I have read the book with very great interest, and with a very thorough conviction that you have a call to this same art of fiction. I think the probabilities here and there require a little more respect than you are disposed to show them, and I have no doubt that the prefatory letter would have been better away, on the ground that a book (of all things) should speak for and explain itself. But the story contains admirable writing, and many clear evidences of a very delicate discrimination of character. It is delightful to find throughout that you have taken great pains with it besides, and have 'gone at it' with a perfect knowledge of the jolter-headedness of the conceited idiots who suppose that volumes are to be tossed off like pancakes, and that any writing can be done without the utmost application, the greatest patience, and the steadiest energy of which the writer is capable.

For all these reasons I have made *Basil's* acquaintance with great gratification, and entertain a high respect for him. And I hope that I shall become intimate with many worthy descendants of his, who are yet in the limbo of creatures waiting to be born.

Always faithfully yours.

PS.—I am open to any proposal to go anywhere any day or days this week. Fresh air and change in any amount I am ready for. If I could only find an idle man (this is a general observation), he would find the warmest recognition in this direction.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Monday Evening, Twentieth December, 1852.*

MY DEAR STONE,—Every appearance of brightness! Shall I expect you to-morrow morning? If so, at what hour? Mr. Frank Stone,  
A.R.A.

I think of taking train afterwards, and going down for a walk on Chatham lines. If you can spare the day for fresh air and an impromptu bit of fish and chop, I can recommend you one of the most delightful of men for a companion. O, he is indeed refreshing!!! Ever affectionately yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Twenty-third December, 1852.*

MY DEAR COLLINS,—I am suddenly laid by the heels in consequence of Wills having gone blind without any notice—I hope and believe from mere temporary inflammation. This obliges me to be at the office all day to-day, and to resume my attendance there to-morrow. But if you will come there to-morrow afternoon—say at about three o'clock—I think we may forage pleasantly for a dinner in the City, and then go and look at Christmas Eve in White-chapel, which is always a curious thing. Mr. W. Wilkie Collins.

OFFICE OF 'HOUSEHOLD WORDS,' *Christmas Eve, 1852.*

MY DEAR WILLS,—I have gone carefully through the number—an awful one for the amount of correction required—and have made everything right. If my mind could have been materialised, and drawn along the tops of all the spikes on the outside of the Queen's Bench prison, it could not have been more agonised than by the ———, which, for imbecility, carelessness, slovenly composition, relatives without antecedents, universal chaos, and one absorbing whirlpool of joiter-headedness, beats anything in print and paper I have ever 'gone at' in my life. Mr. W. H. Wills.



I shall come and see how you are to-morrow. Meantime everything is in perfect trim in these parts, and I have sent down to Stacey to come here and top up with a final interview before I go.

Just after I had sent the messenger off to you, yesterday, concerning the toll-taker memoranda, the other idea came into my head, and in the most obliging manner came out of it.

Ever faithfully yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Sunday, Twenty-sixth December, 1852.*

Mr. G.  
Linnæus  
Banks.

MY DEAR SIR,—I will not attempt to tell you how affected and gratified I am by the intelligence your kind letter conveys to me. Nothing would be more welcome to me than such a mark of confidence and approval from such a source, nothing more precious, or that I could set a higher worth upon.

I hasten to return the gauges, of which I have marked one as the size of the finger, from which this token will never more be absent as long as I live.

With feelings of the liveliest gratitude and cordiality towards the many friends who so honour me, and with many thanks to you for the genial earnestness with which you represent them, I am, my dear Sir,        Very faithfully yours.

1853

#### NARRATIVE

IN this year, Charles Dickens was still writing *Bleak House*, and went to Brighton for a short time in the spring. In May he had an attack of illness, a return of an old trouble of an inflammatory pain in the side, which was short but very severe while it lasted. Immediately on his recovery, early in June, a departure from London for the summer was resolved upon. He had decided upon trying Boulogne this year for his holiday sojourn, and as soon as he was strong enough to travel, he, his wife, and sister-in-law went there in advance of the family, taking up their quarters at the Hôtel des Bains, to find a house, which was speedily done. The pretty

little Villa des Moulineaux, and its excellent landlord, at once took his fancy, and in that house, and in another on the same ground, also belonging to M. Beaucourt, he passed three very happy summers. And he became as much attached to 'Our French Watering Place' as to 'Our English' one. Having written a sketch of Broadstairs under that name in *Household Words*, he did the same of Boulogne under the former title.

During the summer, besides his other work, he was employed in dictating *The Child's History of England*, which he published in *Household Words*, and which was the only book he ever wrote by dictation. But, as at Broadstairs and other seaside homes, he had always plenty of relaxation and enjoyment in the visits of his friends. In September he finished *Bleak House*, and in October he started with Mr. Wilkie Collins and Mr. Egg from Boulogne, on an excursion through parts of Switzerland and Italy; his wife and family going home at the same time, and himself returning to Tavistock House early in December. His eldest son, Charles, had left Eton some time before this, and had gone for the completion of his education to Leipsic. He was to leave Germany at the end of the year, therefore it was arranged that he should meet the travellers in Paris on their homeward journey, and they all returned together.

Just before Christmas Charles Dickens went to Birmingham in fulfilment of an offer which he had made at the dinner given to him at Birmingham on the Sixth of January (of which he writes to Mr. Macready in the first letter that follows here), to give two readings from his own books for the benefit of the New Midland Institute. They were his first public readings. He read *The Christmas Carol* on one evening, and *The Cricket on the Hearth* on the next, before enormous audiences. The success was so great, and the sum of money realised for the institute so large, that he consented to give a second reading of *The Christmas Carol*, remaining another night in Birmingham for the purpose, on the condition that seats were reserved, at prices within their means, for the working men. And to his great satisfaction they formed a large proportion, and were among the most enthusiastic



and appreciative of his audience. He was accompanied by his wife and sister-in-law, and on this occasion a breakfast was given to him after his last reading, at which a silver flower-basket, duly inscribed, was very gracefully presented to *Mrs. Charles Dickens*.

The letters in this year require little explanation. Those to his wife and sister-in-law and Mr. Wills give a little history of his Italian journey. At Naples he found his excellent friend Sir James Emerson Tennent, with his wife and daughter, with whom he joined company in the ascent of Vesuvius.

The two letters to M. Régnier, the distinguished actor of the Théâtre Français—with whom Charles Dickens had formed a sincere friendship during his first residence in Paris—on the subject of a projected benefit to Miss Kelly, need no explanation.

Mr. John Delane, editor of the *Times*, and always a highly-esteemed friend of Charles Dickens, had given him an introduction to a school at Boulogne, kept by two English gentlemen, one a clergyman and the other a former Eton master, the Rev. W. Bewsher and Mr. Gibson. He had at various times four boys at this school, and very frequently afterwards he expressed his gratitude to Mr. Delane for having given him the introduction, which turned out so satisfactory in every respect.

The letter of grateful acknowledgment from Mr. Poole and Charles Dickens to Lord Russell was for the pension for which the old dramatic author was indebted to that nobleman, and which enabled him to live comfortably until the end of his life.

A note to Mr. Marcus Stone was sent with a copy of *The Child's History of England*. The sketch referred to was one of 'Jo,' in *Bleak House*, which showed great feeling and artistic promise, since fully fulfilled by the young painter, but very remarkable in a boy so young as he was at that time. The letter to Mr. Stanfield, in seafaring language, is a specimen of the playful way in which he frequently addressed that dear friend.

'A curiosity from *him*. No date. No signature.'—W. H. W.

MY DEAR WILLS,—I have not a shadow of doubt about Miss Martineau's story. It is certain to tell. I think it very effectively, admirably done; a fine plain purpose in it; quite a singular novelty. For the last story in the Christmas number it will be great. I couldn't wish for a better.

Mrs. Gaskell's ghost story I have got this morning; have not yet read. It is long.

H.M.S. *Tavistock*, *Second January*, 1853.

Yoho, old salt! Neptun' ahoy! You don't forget, messmet, as you was to meet Dick Sparkler and Mark Porpuss on the fok'sle of the good ship *Owssel Words*, Wednesday next, half-past four? Not you; for when did Stanfell ever pass his word to go anywhere and not come? Well. Belay, my heart of oak, belay! Come alongside the *Tavistock* same day and hour, 'stead of *Owssel Words*. Hail your shipmets, and they'll drop over the side and join you, like two new shillings a-droppin' into the purser's pocket. Damn all lubberly boys and swabs, and give *me* the lad with the tarry trousers, which shines to me like di'mings bright!

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Friday Night, Fourteenth January*, 1853.

MY DEAREST MACREADY,—I have been much affected by the receipt of your kindest and best of letters; for I know out of the midst of what anxieties it comes to me, and I appreciate such remembrance from my heart. You and yours are always with us, however. It is no new thing for you to have a part in any scene of my life. It very rarely happens that a day passes without our thoughts and conversation travelling to Sherborne. We are so much there that I cannot tell you how plainly I see you as I write.

I know you would have been full of sympathy and approval if you had been present at Birmingham, and that you would have concurred in the tone I tried to take about the eternal duties of the arts to the people. I took the liberty of putting the court and that kind of thing out of the question,



and recognising nothing *but* the arts and the people. The more we see of life and its brevity, and the world and its varieties, the more we know that no exercise of our abilities in any art, but the addressing of it to the great ocean of humanity in which we are drops, and not to bye-ponds (very stagnant) here and there, ever can or ever will lay the foundations of an endurable retrospect. Is it not so? *You* should have as much practical information on this subject, now, my dear friend, as any man.

My dearest Macready, I cannot forbear this closing word. I still look forward to our meeting as we used to do in the happy times we have known together, so far as your old hopefulness and energy are concerned. And I think I never in my life have been more glad to receive a sign, than I have been to hail that which I find in your handwriting.

Some of your old friends at Birmingham are full of interest and enquiry. I am ever, and no matter where I am—am quite as much in a crowd as alone—my dearest Macready,

Your affectionate and most attached Friend.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Tuesday, January Eighteenth, 1853.*

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

MY DEAR COLLINS,—If you should be disposed to revel in the glories of the eccentric British Drayma, on Saturday evening, I am the man to join in so great a movement. My money is to be heard of at the Bar of the Household Words at five o'clock on that afternoon.

Gin Punch is also to be heard of at the Family arms, Tavistock, on Sunday next at five, when the National Sparkler will be prepared to give Lithers a bellyful if he means anything but Bounce.

I have been thinking of the Italian project, and reducing the time to two months—from the 20th October to the 20th December—see the way to a trip that shall really not exclude any foremost place, and be reasonable too. Details when we meet.

Ever faithfully.

1 JUNCTION PARADE, BRIGHTON, *Thursday Night, Fourth March, 1853.*

MY DEAR WILLS,—I am sorry, but Brutus sacrifices unborn children of his own as well as those of other people. ‘The Sorrows of Childhood,’ long in type, and long a mere mysterious name, must come out. The paper really is, like the celebrated ambassadorial appointment, ‘too bad.’

Mr. W. H.  
Wills.

‘A Doctor of Morals,’ *impossible of insertion as it stands.* A mere puff, with all the difficult facts of the question blinked, and many statements utterly at variance with what I am known to have written. It is exactly because the great bulk of offences in a great number of places are committed by professed thieves, that it will not do to have pet prisoning advocated without grave remonstrance and great care. That class of prisoner is not to be reformed. We must begin at the beginning and prevent, by stringent correction and supervision of wicked parents, that class of prisoner from being regularly supplied as if he were a human necessity.

Do they teach trades in workhouses and try to fit *their* people (the worst part of them) for society? Come with me to Tothill Fields Bridewell, and I will show you what a workhouse-girl is. Or look to my ‘Walk in a Workhouse’ (in *H. W.*) and to the glance at the youths I saw in one place positively kept like wolves.

Mr. ——— thinks prisons could be made nearly self-supporting. Have you any idea of the difficulty that is found in disposing of Prison-work, or does he think that the Tread-mills didn’t grind the air because the State or the Magistracy objected to the competition of prison-labour with free-labour, but because the work *could not be got?*

I never can have any kind of prison-discipline disquisition in *H. W.* that does not start with the first great principle I have laid down, and that does not protest against Prisons being considered *per se*. Whatever chance is given to a man in a prison must be given to a man in a refuge for distress.

The article in itself is very good, but it must have these points in it, otherwise I am not only compromising opinions I am known to hold, but the journal itself is blowing hot and cold, and playing fast and loose in a ridiculous way.



'Starting a Paper in India' is very droll to us. But it is full of references that the public don't understand, and don't in the least care for. Bourgeois, brevier, minion, and non-pareil, long primer, turn-ups, dunning advertisements, and reprints, back form, imposing-stone, and locking-up, are all quite out of their way, and a sort of slang that they have no interest in.

Let me see a revise when you have got it together, and if you can strengthen it—do. I mention all the objections that occur to me as I go on, not because you can obviate them (except in the case of the prison-paper), but because if I make a point of doing so always you will feel and judge the more readily both for yourself and me too when I take an Italian flight.

YOU:

How are the eyes getting on?

ME:

I have been at work all day.

Ever faithfully

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Third May*, 1853.

Mrs.  
Gaskell.

MY DEAR MRS. GASKELL,—The subject is certainly NOT too serious, so sensibly treated. I have no doubt that you may do a great deal of good by pursuing it in *Household Words*. I thoroughly agree in all you say in your note, have similar reasons for giving it some anxious consideration, and shall be greatly interested in it. Pray decide to do it. Send the papers, as you write them, to me. Meanwhile I will think of a name for them, and bring it to bear upon yours, if I think yours improvable. I am sure you may rely on being widely understood and sympathised with.

Forget that I called those two women my dear friends! Why, if I told you a fiftieth part of what I have thought about them, you would write me the most suspicious of notes, refusing to receive the fiftieth part of that. So I don't write, particularly as you laid your injunctions on me concerning Ruth. In revenge, I will now mention one word that I wish you would take out whenever you reprint that book. She

would never—I am ready to make affidavit before any authority in the land—have called her seducer ‘Sir,’ when they were living at that hotel in Wales. A girl pretending to be what she really was would have done it, but she—never!

Ever most faithfully yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Monday, Ninth May, 1853.*

MY DEAR RÉGNIER,—I meant to have spoken to you last night about a matter in which I hope you can assist me, but I forgot it. I think I must have been quite *bouleversé* by your supposing (as you pretended to do, when you went away) that it was not a great pleasure and delight to me to see you act!

There is a certain Miss Kelly,<sup>1</sup> now sixty-two years old, who was once one of the very best of English actresses, in the greater and better days of the English theatre. She has much need of a benefit, and I am exerting myself to arrange one for her, on or about the Ninth of June, if possible, at the St. James's Theatre. The first piece will be an entertainment of her own, and she will act in the last. Between these two (and at the best time of the night), it would be a great attraction to the public, and a great proof of friendship to me, if you would act. If we could manage, through your influence and with your assistance, to present a little French vaudeville, such as *Le bon Homme jadis*, it would make the night a grand success.

Mitchell's permission, I suppose, would be required. That I will undertake to apply for, if you tell me that you are willing to help us, and that you could answer for the other necessary actors in the little French piece, whatever the piece might be, that you would choose for the purpose. Pray write me a short note in answer, on this point.

I ought to tell you that the benefit will be ‘under distinguished patronage.’ The Duke of Devonshire, the Duke of Leinster, the Duke of Beaufort, etc. etc., are members of the

<sup>1</sup> Still living [1882], and in sadly necessitous circumstances. She has just been made the subject of a memorial to the Prime Minister, praying for a pension on the Civil List. Miss Kelly is now dead [1892].



committee with me, and I have no doubt that the audience will be of the *élite*.

I have asked Mr. Chapman to come to me to-morrow, to arrange for the hiring of the theatre. Mr. Harley (a favourite English comedian whom you may know) is our secretary. And if I could assure the committee to-morrow afternoon of your co-operation, I am sure they would be overjoyed.

*Votre tout dévoué.*

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Twentieth May, 1853.*

Monsieur  
Régner.

MY DEAR RÉGNIER,—I am heartily obliged to you for your kind letter respecting Miss Kelly's benefit. It is to take place *on Thursday, the Sixteenth June*; Thursday the Ninth (the day originally proposed) being the day of Ascot Races, and therefore a bad one for the purpose.

Mitchell, like a brave *garçon* as he is, most willingly consents to your acting for us. Will you think what little French piece it will be best to do, in order that I may have it ready for the bills?      Ever faithfully yours, my dear Régner.

BOULOGNE, *Monday, Thirteenth June, 1853.*

Mr. W. H.  
Wills.

MY DEAR WILLS,—You will be glad, I know, to hear that we had a delightful passage yesterday, and that I made a perfect phenomenon of a dinner. It is raining hard to-day, and my back feels the draught; but I am otherwise still mending.

I have signed, sealed, and delivered a contract for a house (once occupied for two years by a man I knew in Switzerland), which is not a large one, but stands in the middle of a great garden, with what the landlord calls a 'forest' at the back, and is now surrounded by flowers, vegetables, and all manner of growth. A queer, odd, French place, but extremely well supplied with all table and other conveniences, and strongly recommended. The address is:

Château des Moulineaux,  
Rue Beaurepaire, Boulogne.

There is a coach-house, stabling for half a dozen horses, and I don't know what.

We take possession this afternoon, and I am now laying in a good stock of creature comforts. So no more at present from  
Yours ever faithfully.

CHÂTEAU DES MOULINEAUX, BOULOGNE,  
*Saturday Night, Eighteenth June, 1853.*

‘BLEAK HOUSE’

MY DEAR WILLS,—Thank God I have done half <sup>The same.</sup> the number with great care, and hope to finish on Thursday or Friday next. O how thankful I feel to be able to have done it, and what a relief to get the number out!

GENERAL MOVEMENTS OF INIMITABLE

*I don't think* (I am not sure) I shall come to London until after the completion of *Bleak House*, No. 18—the number after this now in hand—for it strikes me that I am better here at present. I have picked up in the most extraordinary manner, and I believe you would never suppose to look at me that I had had that week or barely an hour of it. If there should be any occasion for our meeting in the meantime, a run over here would do you no harm, and we should be delighted to see you at any time. If you suppose this place to be in a street, you are much mistaken. It is in the country, though not more than ten minutes' walk from the post-office, and is the best doll's-house of many rooms, in the prettiest French grounds, in the most charming situation I have ever seen; the best place I have ever lived in abroad, except at Genoa. You can scarcely imagine the beauty of the air in this richly-wooded hill-side. As to comforts in the house, there are all sorts of things, beginning with no end of the coldest water and running through the most beautiful flowers down to English foot-baths and a Parisian liqueur-stand. I think that's all at present.—Ever, my dear Wills,

Faithfully yours.

CHÂTEAU DES MOULINEAUX, RUE BEAUREPAIRE,  
BOULOGNE, *Thursday, Twenty-third June, 1853.*

MY DEAR PUMPION,—I take the earliest opportunity, after finishing my number—ahem! to write you a line, and to report myself (thank God!)  
Mr. Frank Stone,  
A.R.A.



brown, well, robust, vigorous, open to fight any man in England of my weight, and growing a moustache. Any person of undoubted pluck, in want of a customer, may hear of me at the bar of Bleak House, where my money is down.

I think there is an abundance of places here that would suit you well enough; and Georgina is ready to launch on voyages of discovery and observation with you. But it is necessary that you should consider for how long a time you want it, as the folks here let much more advantageously for the tenant when they know the term—don't like to let without. It seems to me that the best thing you can do is to get a paper of the South Eastern tidal trains, fix your day for coming over here in five hours, let me know the day, and come and see how you like the place. *I* like it better than ever. We can give you a bed (two to spare, at a pinch three), and show you a garden and a view or so. The town is not so cheap as places farther off, but you get a great deal for your money, and by far the best wine at tenpence a bottle that I have ever drank any where. I really desire no better.

I may mention for your guidance (for I count upon your coming to overhaul the general aspect of things), that you have nothing on earth to do with your luggage when it is once in the boat, *until after you have walked ashore*. That you will be filtered with the rest of the passengers through a hideous, whitewashed, quarantine-looking custom-house, where a stern man of military aspect will demand your passport. That you will have nothing of the sort, but will produce your card with this addition: 'Restant à Boulogne, chez M. Charles Dickens, Château des Moulineaux.' That you will then be passed out at a little door, like one of the ill-starred prisoners on the bloody September night, into a yelling and shrieking crowd, cleaving the air with the names of the different hotels, exactly seven thousand six hundred and fifty-four in number. And that your heart will be on the point of sinking with dread, then you will find yourself in the arms of the Sparkler of Albion.

Ever affectionately.

CHÂTEAU DES MOULINEAUX, RUE BEAUREPAIRE,  
BOULOGNE, *Friday, Twenty-fourth June, 1853.*

MY DEAR COLLINS,—I hope you are as well as I am, and have as completely shaken off all your ailings. And I hope, too, that you are disposed for a long visit here. We are established in a doll's country house of many rooms, in a delightful garden. If you have anything to do, this is the place to do it in. And if you have nothing to do, this is also the place to do it in to perfection.

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

You shall have a Pavilion room in the garden, with a delicious view, where you may write no end of Basils. You shall get up your Italian as I raise the fallen fortunes (at present sorely depressed) of mine. You shall live, with a delicate English graft upon the best French manner, and learn to get up early in the morning again. In short, you shall be thoroughly prepared, during the whole summer season, for those great travels that are to come off anon.

Do turn your thoughts this way; coming by South Eastern *Tidal Train* (there is a separate list for that train, the time changing every day as the tide varies), you come in five hours. No passport wanted. Mrs. Dickens and her sister send their kind regards, and beg me to say how glad they will be to see you.

W. WILKIE COLLINS, Esquire.

Our united remembrances to your mother and brother.

BOULOGNE, *Thirtieth June, 1853, Thursday.*

MY DEAR COLLINS,—I am very sorry indeed to hear so bad an account of your illness, and had no idea it had been so severe. I can't help writing (though most unnecessarily I hope) to say that you can't get well too soon; and that I warrant the pure air, regular hours, and perfect repose of this place to bring you round triumphantly. You have only, when you are sufficiently restored, to defy the D—octor and all his works, to write me a line naming your day and hour. My friend *Lord Wilmot* will then be found at the Custom-House.

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

Ward's account of me was a true one. I was thoroughly



disabled—in a week—and doubt if you would have known me. But I recovered with surprising quickness—positively insisting on coming here, against all advice but [Dr.] Elliotson's—and got to work next day but one as if nothing had happened.

And what was the matter with me? Sir—I find this reads like Dr. Johnson directly—Sir, it was an old afflicted

### KIDNEY

once the torment of my childhood, in which I took cold.

BOULOGNE, *Wednesday, Twenty-seventh July, 1853.*

Mr. W. H.  
Wills.

MY DEAR WILLS,—I have thought of another article to be called 'Frauds upon the Fairies,' *à propos* of George Cruikshank's editing. Half playfully and half seriously, I mean to protest most strongly against alteration, for any purpose, of the beautiful little stories which are so tenderly and humanly useful to us in these times, when the world is too much with us early and late; and then to re-write *Cinderella* according to Total Abstinence, Peace Society, and Bloomer principles, and expressly for their propagation.

I shall want his book of *Hop o' my Thumb* (Forster noticed it in the last *Examiner*), and the most simple and popular version of *Cinderella* you can get me. I shall not be able to do it until after finishing *Bleak House*, but I shall do it the more easily for having the books by me. So send them, if convenient, in your next parcel.

Ever faithfully.

BOULOGNE, *Sunday, Seventh August, 1853.*

Mr. W. H.  
Wills.

MY DEAR WILLS,—Can't possibly write autographs until I have written *Bleak House*. My work has been very hard since I have been here; and when I throw down my pen of a day, I throw down myself, and can take up neither article.

The 'C. P.'<sup>1</sup> is very well done, but I cannot make up my mind to lend my blow to the great Forge-bellows of puffery

<sup>1</sup> Crystal Palace.

at work. I so heartily desire to have nothing to do with it, that I wish you would cancel this article altogether, and substitute something else. As to the guide-books, I think they are a sufficiently flatulent botheration in themselves, without being discussed. A lurking desire is always upon me to put Mr. ——'s speech on Accidents to the public, as chairman of the Brighton Railway, against his pretensions as a chairman of public instructors and guardians. And I don't know but that I may come to it at some odd time. This strengthens me in my wish to avoid the bellows.

How two men can have gone, one after the other, to the Camp, and have written nothing about it, passes my comprehension. I have been in great doubt about the end of ——. I wish you would suggest to him from me, when you see him, how wrong it is. Surely he cannot be insensible to the fact that military preparations in England at this time mean Defence. Woman, says ——, means Home, love, children, Mother. Does he not find any protection for these things in a wise and moderate means of Defence; and is not the union between these things and those means one of the most natural, significant, and plain in the world?

I wish you would send friend Barnard here a set of *Household Words*, in a paid parcel (on the other side is an inscription to be neatly pasted into vol. i. before sending), with a post-letter beforehand from yourself, saying that I had begged you to forward the books, feeling so much obliged to him for his uniform attention and politeness. Also that you will not fail to continue his set, as successive volumes appear.

#### ASPECTS OF NATURE

We have had a tremendous sea here. Steam-packet in the harbour frantic, and dashing her brains out against the stone walls.

Ever faithfully.

CHÂTEAU DES MOULINEAUX, BOULOGNE,  
Sunday, Twenty-fourth August, 1853.

MY DEAREST MACREADY,—Some unaccountable delay in the transmission here of the parcel which contained your letter, caused me to come into the re-

Mr. W. C.  
Macready.



ceipt of it a whole week after its date. I immediately wrote to Miss Coutts, who has written to you, and I hope some good may come of it. I know it will not be her fault if none does. I was very much concerned to read your account of poor Mrs. Warner,<sup>1</sup> and to read her own plain and unaffected account of herself. Pray assure her of my cordial sympathy and remembrance, and of my earnest desire to do anything in my power to help to put her mind at ease.

We are living in a beautiful little country place here, where I have been hard at work ever since I came, and am now (after an interval of a week's rest) going to work again to finish *Bleak House*. Kate and Georgina look forward, I assure you, to their Sherborne visit, when I—a mere forlorn wanderer—shall be roaming over the Alps into Italy. I saw *The Midsummer Night's Dream* of the Opéra Comique, done here (very well) last night. The way in which a poet named Willyim Shap Kes Peer gets drunk in company with Sir John Foll Stayffe, fights with a noble knight, Lor Latimeer (who is in love with a maid of honour you may have read of in history, called Mees Oleevia), and promises not to do so any more on observing symptoms of love for him in the Queen of England, is very remarkable. Queen Elizabeth, too, in the profound and impenetrable disguise of a black velvet mask, two inches deep by three broad, following him into taverns and worse places, and enquiring of persons of doubtful reputation for 'the sublime Williams,' was inexpressibly ridiculous. And yet the nonsense was done with a sense quite admirable.

I have been very much struck by the book you sent me. It is one of the wisest, the manliest, and most serviceable I ever read. I am reading it again with the greatest pleasure and admiration.—Ever most affectionately yours,

My dear Macready.

A very celebrated actress at this time, who was dying of cancer.

VILLA DES MOULINEAUX, BOULOGNE,  
Saturday, Twenty-seventh August, 1853.

MY DEAR MRS. WATSON,—I received your letter—most welcome and full of interest to me—when I was hard at work finishing *Bleak House*. We are always talking of you; and I had said but the day before, that one of the first things I would do on my release would be to write to you. To finish the topic of *Bleak House* at once, I will only add that I like the conclusion very much and think it *very pretty indeed*. The story has taken extraordinarily, especially during the last five or six months, when its purpose has been gradually working itself out. It has retained its immense circulation from the first, beating dear old *Copperfield* by a round ten thousand or more. I have never had so many readers. We had a little reading of the final double number here the night before last, and it made a great impression I assure you.

The Hon.  
Mrs.  
Watson.

We are all extremely well, and like Boulogne very much indeed. I laid down the rule before we came, that we would know nobody here, and we *do* know nobody here. We evaded callers as politely as we could, and gradually came to be understood and left to ourselves. It is a fine bracing air, a beautiful open country, and an admirable mixture of town and country. Things are tolerably cheap, and exceedingly good; the people very cheerful, good-looking, and obliging; the houses very clean; the distance to London short, and easily traversed. I think if you came to know the place (which I never did myself until last October, often as I have been through it), you could be but in one mind about it.

Charley is still at Leipzig. I shall take him up somewhere on the Rhine, to bring him home for Christmas, as I come back on my own little tour. He has been in the Hartz Mountains on a walking tour, and has written a journal thereof, which he has sent home in portions. It has cost about as much in postage as would have bought a pair of ponies.

I contemplate starting from here on Monday, the Tenth of October; Catherine, Georgina, and the rest of them will then go home. I shall go first by Paris and Geneva to



Lausanne, for it has a separate place in my memory. If the autumn should be very fine (just possible after such a summer), I shall then go by Chamounix and Martigny, over the Simplon to Milan, thence to Genoa, Leghorn, Pisa, and Naples, thence, I hope, to Sicily. Back by Bologna, Florence, Rome, Verona, Mantua, etc., to Venice, and home by Germany, arriving in good time for Christmas Day. Three nights in Christmas week, I have promised to read in the Town Hall at Birmingham, for the benefit of a new and admirable institution for working men projected there. The Friday will be the last night, and I shall read the *Carol* to two thousand working people, stipulating that they shall have that night entirely to themselves.

It just occurs to me that I mean to engage, for the two months odd, a travelling servant. I have not yet got one. If you should happen to be interested in any good foreigner, well acquainted with the countries and the languages, who would like such a master, how delighted I should be to like *him!*

Ever since I have been here, I have been very hard at work, often getting up at daybreak to write through many hours. I have never had the least return of illness, thank God, though I was so altered (in a week) when I came here, that I doubt if you would have known me. I am redder and browner than ever at the present writing, with the addition of a rather formidable and fierce moustache. Lowestoft I know, by walking over there from Yarmouth, when I went down on an exploring expedition, previous to *Copperfield*. It is a fine place. I saw the name 'Blunderstone' on a direction post between it and Yarmouth, and took it from the said direction-post for the book. In some of the descriptions of Chesney Wold, I have taken many bits, chiefly about trees and shadows, from observations made at Rockingham. I wonder whether you have ever thought so! I shall hope to hear from you again soon, and shall not fail to write again before I go away. There seems to be nothing but 'I' in this letter; but 'I' know, my dear friend, that you will be more interested in that letter in the present connection, than in other I could take from the alphabet.

If I were to give you a hint of what we feel at the sight of your handwriting, and at the receipt of a word from yourself about yourself, and the dear boys, and the precious little girls, I should begin to be sorrowful, which is rather the tendency of my mind at the close of another long book.—  
Ever, my dear Mrs. Watson,

Yours, with true affection and regard.

CHÂTEAU DES MOULINEAUX, RUE BEAUREPAIRE, BOULOGNE.

MY DEAR CUNNINGHAM,—A note—Cerberus-like—of three heads.

Mr. Peter  
Cunning-  
ham.

First. I know you will be glad to hear that the manager is himself again. Vigorous, brown, energetic, muscular; the pride of Albion and the admiration of Gaul.

Secondly. I told Wills when I left home, that I was quite pained to see the end of your excellent 'Bowl of Punch' altered. I was unaffectedly touched and gratified by the heartiness of the original; and saw no earthly, celestial, or subterranean objection to its remaining, as it did not so unmistakably apply to me as to necessitate the observance of my usual precaution in the case of such references, by any means.

Thirdly. If you ever have a holiday that you don't know what to do with, *do* come and pass a little time here. Excellent light wines on the premises, French cookery, millions of roses, two cows (for milk punch), vegetables cut for the pot, and handed in at the kitchen window; five summer-houses, fifteen fountains (with no water in 'em), and thirty-seven clocks (keeping, as I conceive, Australian time; having no reference whatever to the hours on this side of the globe).

I know, my dear Cunningham, that the British nation can ill afford to lose you; and that when the Audit Office mice are away, the cats of that great public establishment will play. But pray consider that the bow may be sometimes bent too long, and that over-arduous application, even in patriotic service, is to be avoided. No one can more highly estimate your devotion to the best interests of Britain than I. But I wish to see it tempered with a wise consideration



for your own amusement, recreation, and pastime. All work and no play make Peter a dull boy as well as Jack. And (if I may claim the privilege of friendship to remonstrate) I would say that you do not take enough time for your meals. Dinner, for instance, you habitually neglect. Believe me, this rustic repose will do you good. Winkles also are to be obtained in these parts, and it is well remarked by Poor Richard, that a bird in the handbook is worth two in the bush.

Ever cordially yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, LONDON, *Eighth September*, 1853.

Mr. Walter  
Savage  
Landor.

MY DEAR LANDOR,—I am in town for a day or two, and Forster tells me I may now write to thank you for the happiness you have given me by honouring my name with such generous mention, on such a noble place, in your great book. I believe he has told you already that I wrote to him from Boulogne, not knowing what to do, as I had not received the precious volume, and feared you might have some plan of sending it to me, with which my premature writing would interfere.

You know how heartily and inexpressibly I prize what you have written to me, or you never would have selected me for such a distinction. I could never thank you enough, my dear Landor, and I will not thank you in words any more. Believe me, I receive the dedication like a great dignity, the worth of which I hope I thoroughly know. The Queen could give me none in exchange that I wouldn't laughingly snap my fingers at.

Walter is a very good boy, and comes home from school with honourable commendation. He passed last Sunday in solitary confinement (in a bath-room) on bread and water, for terminating a dispute with the nurse by throwing a chair in her direction. It is the very first occasion of his ever having got into trouble, for he is a great favourite with the whole house, and one of the most amiable boys in the boy-world. (He comes out on birthdays in a blaze of shirt-pin.)

If I go and look at your house, as I shall if I go to Flor-

ence, I shall bring you back another leaf from the same tree as I plucked the last from.—Ever, my dear Landor,

Heartily and affectionately yours.

VILLA DES MOULINEAUX, BOULOGNE,

*Monday, Twelfth September, 1853.*

MY DEAR DELANE,—I am very much obliged <sup>Mr. John</sup> to you, I assure you, for your frank and full <sup>Delane.</sup> reply to my note. Nothing could be more satisfactory, and I have to-day seen Mr. Gibson and placed my two small representatives under his charge. His manner is exactly what you describe him. I was greatly pleased with his genuineness altogether.

We remain here until the tenth of next month, when I am going to desert my wife and family and run about Italy until Christmas. If I can execute any little commission for you or Mrs. Delane—in the Genoa street of silversmiths, or anywhere else—I shall be delighted to do so. I have been in the receipt of several letters from Macready lately, and rejoice to find him quite himself again, though I have great misgivings that he will lose his eldest boy before he can be got to India.

I never saw anything so ridiculous as this place at present. They expected the Emperor ten or twelve days ago, and put up all manner of triumphal arches made of evergreens, which look like tea-leaves now, and will take a withered and weird appearance hardly to be foreseen, long before the twenty-fifth, when the visit is vaguely expected to come off. In addition to these faded garlands all over the leading streets, there are painted eagles hoisted over gateways and sprawling across a hundred ways, which have been washed out by the rain and are now being blistered by the sun, until they look horribly ludicrous. And a number of our benighted compatriots who came over to see a perfect blaze of *fêtes*, go wandering among these shrivelled preparations and staring at ten thousand flag-poles without any flags upon them, with a kind of indignant curiosity and personal injury quite irresistible.—With many thanks,

Very faithfully yours.



BOULOGNE, *Sunday, Eighteenth September, 1853.*

COURIER

Mr. W. H.  
Wills.

MY DEAR WILLS,—Edward Kaub will bring this. He turned up yesterday, accounting for his delay by waiting for a written recommendation, and having at the last moment (as a foreigner, not being an Englishman) a passport to get. I quite agree with you as to his appearance and manner, and have engaged him. It strikes me that it would be an excellent beginning if you would deliver him a neat and appropriate address, telling him what in your conscience you can find to tell of me favourably as a master, and particularly impressing upon him *readiness and punctuality* on his part as the great things to be observed. I think it would have a much better effect than anything I could say in this stage, if said from yourself. But I shall be much obliged to you if you will act upon this hint forthwith.

Ever faithfully.

VILLA DES MOULINEAUX, BOULOGNE,  
*Wednesday, Twenty-first September, 1853.*The  
Lord John.  
Russell.

MY DEAR LORD,—Your note having been forwarded to me here, I cannot forbear thanking you with all my heart for your great kindness. Mr. Forster had previously sent me a copy of your letter to him, together with the expression of the high and lasting gratification he had in your handsome response. I know he feels it most sincerely.

I became the prey of a perfect spasm of sensitive twinges, when I found that the close of *Bleak House* had not penetrated to 'the wilds of the North' when your letter left those parts. I was so very much interested in it myself when I wrote it here last month, that I have a fond sort of faith in its interesting its readers. But for the hope that you may have got it by this time, I should refuse comfort. That supports me.

I fear there is not much chance of my being able to execute any little commission for Lady John anywhere in Italy. But I am going across the Alps, returning home to London

for Christmas Day, and should indeed be happy if I could do her any dwarf service.

You will be interested, I think, to hear that Poole lives happily on his pension, and lives within it. He is quite incapable of any mental exertion, and what he would have done without it I cannot imagine. I send it to him at Paris every quarter. It is something, even amid the estimation in which you are held, which is but a foreshadowing of what shall be by and by as the people advance, to be so gratefully remembered, as he, with the best reason, remembers you. Forgive my saying this. But the manner of that transaction, no less than the matter, is always fresh in my memory in association with your name, and I cannot help it.—My dear Lord,

Yours very faithfully and obliged.

BOULOGNE, *Wednesday, Twenty-first September, 1853.*

MY DEAR MRS. WATSON,—The courier was unfortunately engaged. He offered to recommend another, but I had several applicants, and begged Mr. Wills to hold a grand review at the *Household Words* office, and select the man who is to bring me down as his victim. I am extremely sorry the man you recommended was not to be had. I should have been so delighted to take him.

The Hon.  
Mrs.  
Watson.

I am finishing *The Child's History*; and clearing the way through *Household Words*, in general, before I go on my trip. I forget whether I told you that Mr. Egg the painter and Mr. Collins are going with me. The other day I was in town. In case you should not have heard of the condition of that deserted village, I think it worth mentioning. All the streets of any note were unpaved, mountains high, and all the omnibuses were sliding down alleys, and looking into the upper windows of small houses. At eleven o'clock one morning I was positively *alone* in Bond Street. I went to one of my tailors, and he was at Brighton. A smutty-faced woman among some gorgeous regimentals, half-finished, had not the least idea when he would be back. I went to another of my tailors, and he was in an upper room, with open windows and surrounded by mignonette-boxes, playing the



piano in the bosom of his family. I went to my hosier's, and two of the least presentable of 'the young men' of that elegant establishment were playing at draughts in the back shop. (Likewise I beheld a porter-pot hastily concealed under a Turkish dressing-gown of a golden pattern.) I then went wandering about to look for some ingenious port-manteau, and near the corner of St. James's Street saw a solitary being sitting in a trunk-shop, absorbed in a book which, on a close inspection, I found to be *Bleak House*. I thought this looked well, and went in. And he really was more interested in seeing me, when he knew who I was, than any face I had seen in any house, every house I knew being occupied by painters, including my own. I went to the Athenæum that same night, to get my dinner, and it was shut up for repairs. I went home late, and had forgotten the key and was locked out.

Preparations were made here, about six weeks ago, to receive the Emperor, who is not come yet. Meanwhile our countrymen (deluded in the first excitement) go about staring at these arrangements, and *will* persist in speaking an unknown tongue to the French people, who *will* speak English to them.

We are all quite well. Going to drop two small boys here at school with a former Eton tutor highly recommended to me. Charley was heard of a day or two ago. He says his professor 'is very short-sighted, always in green spectacles, always drinking weak beer, always smoking a pipe, and always at work.' The last qualification seems to appear to Charley the most astonishing one.—Ever, my dear Mrs. Watson,

Most affectionately yours.

BOULOGNE, *Thirtieth September*, 1853.

Rev. James  
White.

MY DEAR WHITE,—As you wickedly failed in your truth to the writer of books you adore, I write something that I hoped to have said, and meant to have said, in the confidence of the Pavilion among the trees.

Will you write another story for the Christmas No.? It will be exactly (I mean the Xmas No.) on the same plan as the last.

Loves from all to all, and my particular love to Mrs.  
White. Ever cordially yours.

HÔTEL DE LONDRES, CHAMOUNIX,  
*Thursday Night, Twentieth October, 1853.*

MY DEAREST KATE,—We came here last night after a very long journey over very bad roads, from Geneva, and leave here (for Martigny, by the Tête Noire) at six to-morrow morning. Next morning early we mean to try the Simplon.

Mrs.  
Charles  
Dickens.

After breakfast to-day we ascended to the Mer de Glace—wonderfully different at this time of the year from when we saw it—a great portion of the ascent being covered with snow, and the climbing very difficult. Regardless of my mule, I walked up and walked down again, to the great admiration of the guides, who pronounced me ‘an Intrepid.’ The little house at the top being closed for the winter, and Edward having forgotten to carry any brandy, we had nothing to drink at the top—which was a considerable disappointment to the Inimitable, who was steaming with perspiration from head to foot. But we made a fire in the snow with some sticks, and after a not too comfortable rest came down again. It took a long time—from ten to three.

The appearance of Chamounix at this time of the year is very remarkable. The travellers are over for the season, the inns are generally shut up, all the people who can afford it are moving off to Geneva, the snow is low on the mountains, and the general desolation and grandeur extraordinarily fine. I wanted to pass by the Col de Balme, but the snow lies too deep upon it.

You would have been quite delighted if you could have seen the warmth of our old Lausanne friends, and the heartiness with which they crowded down on a fearfully bad morning to see us off. We passed the night at the Ecu de Genève, in the rooms once our old rooms—at that time (the day before yesterday) occupied by the Queen of the French (ex-I mean) and Prince Joinville and his family.

Tell Sydney that all the way here from Geneva, and up to the Sea of Ice this morning, I wore his knitting, which was



very comfortable indeed. I mean to wear it on the long mule journey to Martigny to-morrow.

We get on extremely well. Edward continues as before. He had never been here, and I took him up to the Mer de Glace this morning, and had a mule for him.

I shall leave this open, as usual, to add a word or two on our arrival at Martigny. We have had an amusingly absurd incident this afternoon. When we came here, I saw added to the hotel—our old hotel, and I am now writing in the room where we once dined at the table d'hôte—some baths, cold and hot, down on the margin of the torrent below. This induced us to order three hot baths. Thereupon the keys of the bath-rooms were found with immense difficulty, women ran backwards and forwards across the bridge, men bore in great quantities of wood, a horrible furnace was lighted, and a smoke was raised which filled the whole valley. This began at half-past three, and we congratulated each other on the distinction we should probably acquire by being the cause of the conflagration of the whole village. We sat by the fire until half-past five (dinner-time), and still no baths. Then Edward came up to say that the water was as yet only 'tippit,' which we supposed to be tepid, but that by half-past eight it would be in a noble state. Ever since the smoke has poured forth in enormous volume, and the furnace has blazed, and the women have gone and come over the bridge, and piles of wood have been carried in; but we observed a general avoidance of us by the establishment which still looks like a failure. We have had a capital dinner, the dessert whereof is now on the table. When we arrived, at nearly seven last night, all the linen in the house, newly washed, was piled in the sitting-room, all the curtains were taken down, and all the chairs piled bottom upwards. They cleared away as much as they could directly, and had even got the curtains up at breakfast this morning.

I am looking forward to letters at Genoa, though I doubt if we shall get there (supposing all things right at the Simplon) before Monday night or Tuesday morning. I found there last night what F—— would call 'Mr. Smith's' story of Mont Blanc, and took it to bed to read. It is ex-

tremely well and unaffectedly done. You would be interested in it.

MARTIGNY, *Friday Afternoon, Twenty-first October.*

Safely arrived here after a most delightful day, without a cloud. I walked the whole way. The scenery most beautifully presented. We are in the hotel where our old St. Bernard party assembled.

I should like to see you all very much indeed.

Ever affectionately.

HÔTEL DE LA VILLE, MILAN, *Twenty-fifth October, 1853.*

MY DEAREST CATHERINE,—The road from Chamounix here takes so much more time than I supposed (for I travelled it day and night, and my companions don't at all understand the idea of never going to bed) that we only reached Milan last night, though we had been travelling twelve and fifteen hours a day. We crossed the Simplon on Sunday, when there was not (as there is not now) a particle of cloud in the whole sky, and when the pass was as nobly grand and beautiful as it possibly can be. There was a good deal of snow upon the top, but not across the road, which had been cleared. We crossed the Austrian frontier yesterday, and, both there and at the gate of Milan, received all possible consideration and politeness.

Mrs.  
Charles  
Dickens.

I have not seen Bairr yet. He has removed from the old hotel to a larger one at a few hours' distance. The head-waiter remembered me very well last night after I had talked to him a little while, and was greatly interested in hearing about all the family, and about poor Roche. The boy we used to have at Lausanne is now seventeen-and-a-half—very tall, he says. The elder girl, fifteen, very like her mother, but taller and more beautiful. He described poor Mrs. Bairr's death (I am speaking of the head-waiter before mentioned) in most vivacious Italian. It was all over in ten minutes, he said. She put her hands to her head one day, down in the courtyard, and cried out that she heard little bells ringing violently in her ears. They sent off for Bairr, who was close by. When she saw him, she stretched out



her arms, said in English, 'Adieu, my dear!' and fell dead. He has not married again, and he never will. She was a good woman (my friend went on), excellent woman, full of charity, loved the poor, but *un poco furiosa*—that was nothing!

The new hotel is just like the old one, admirably kept, excellently furnished, and a model of comfort. I hope to be at Genoa on Thursday morning, and to find your letter there. We have agreed to drop Sicily, and to return home by way of Marseilles. Our projected time for reaching London is the tenth of December.

As this house is full, I daresay we shall meet some one we know at the table d'hôte to-day. It is extraordinary that the only travellers we have encountered, since we left Paris, have been one horribly vapid Englishman and wife whom we dropped at Basle, one boring Englishman whom we found (and, thank God, left) at Geneva, and two English maiden ladies, whom we found sitting on a rock (with parasols) the day before yesterday, in the most magnificent part of the Gorge of Gondo, the most awful portion of the Simplon—there waiting their travelling chariot, in which, with their money, their parasols, and a perfect shop of baskets, they were carefully *locked up* by an English servant in sky blue and silver buttons. We have been in the most extraordinary vehicles—like swings, like boats, like Noah's arks, like barges and enormous bedsteads. After dark last night, a landlord, where we changed horses, discovered that the luggage would certainly be stolen from *questo porco d'uno carro*—this pig of a cart—his complimentary description of our carriage, unless cords were attached to each of the trunks, which cords were to hang down so that we might hold them in our hands all the way, and feel any tug that might be made at our treasures. You will imagine the absurdity of our jolting along some twenty miles in this way, exactly as if we were in three shower-baths and were afraid to pull the string.

We are going to the Scala to-night, having got the old box belonging to the hotel, the old key of which is lying beside me on the table. There seem to be no singers of note here now, and it appears for the time to have fallen off con-

siderably. I shall now bring this to a close, hoping that I may have more interesting jottings to send you about the old scenes and people, from Genoa, where we shall stay two days. You are now, I take it, at Macready's. I shall be greatly interested by your account of your visit there. We often talk of you all.

Edward's Italian is (I fear) very weak. When we began to get really into the language, he reminded me of poor Roche in Germany. But he seems to have picked up a little this morning. He has been unfortunate with the unlucky Egg, leaving a pair of his shoes (his favourite shoes) behind in Paris, and his flannel dressing-gown yesterday morning at Domo d'Ossola. In all other respects he is just as he was.

Egg and Collins have gone out to kill the lions here, and I take advantage of their absence to write to you, Georgy, and Miss Coutts. Wills will have told you, I daresay, that Cerjat accompanied us on a miserably wet morning, in a heavy rain, down the lake. By the bye, the wife of one of his cousins, born in France of German parents, living in the next house to Haldimand's, is one of the most charming, natural, open-faced, and delightful women I ever saw. Madame de — is set up as the great attraction of Lausanne; but this capital creature shuts her up altogether. We have called her (her—the real belle); ever since, the early closing movement.

I am impatient for letters from home; confused ideas are upon me that you are going to White's, but I have no notion when.

Take care of yourself, and God bless you.

Ever most affectionately.

HÔTEL DE LA VILLE, MILAN, *Tuesday, Twenty-fifth October, 1853.*

MY DEAR GEORGY,—I have walked to that ex-  
tent in Switzerland (walked over the Simplon on <sup>Miss Hogarth.</sup> Sunday, as an addition to the other feats) that one pair of the new strong shoes has gone to be mended this morning, and the other is in but a poor way; the snow having played the mischief with them.



On the Swiss side of the Simplon, we slept at the beastliest little town, in the wildest kind of house, where some fifty cats tumbled into the corridor outside our bedrooms all at once in the middle of the night—whether through the roof or not I don't know; for it was dark when we got up—and made such a horrible and terrific noise that we started out of our beds in a panic. I strongly objected to opening the door lest they should get into the room and tear at us; but Edward opened his, and laid about him until he dispersed them. At Domo d'Ossola we had three immense bedrooms (Egg's bed twelve feet wide!), and a sala of imperceptible extent in the dim light of two candles and a wood fire; but were very well and very cheaply entertained. Here we are, as you know, housed in the greatest comfort.

We continue to get on very well together. We really do admirably. I lose no opportunity of inculcating the lesson that it is of no use to be out of temper in travelling, and it is very seldom wanted for any of us. Egg is an excellent fellow, and full of good qualities; I am sure a generous and staunch man at heart, and a good and honourable nature.

I shall hope to hear from you and shall be very glad indeed to do so. No more at present.

Ever most affectionately.

CROCE DI MALTA, GENOA,  
*Friday Night, Twenty-ninth October, 1853.*

Mrs.  
Charles  
Dickens.

MY DEAREST CATHERINE,—As we arrived here later than I had expected (in consequence of the journey from Milan being most horribly slow) I received your welcome letter only this morning. I write this before going to bed, that I may be sure of not being taken by any engagement off the post time to-morrow.

We came in last night between seven and eight. The railroad to Turin is finished and opened to within twenty miles of Genoa. Its effect upon the whole town, and especially upon that part of it lying down beyond the lighthouse and away by San Pietro d'Arena, is quite wonderful. I only knew the place by the lighthouse, so numerous were the new buildings, so wide the streets, so busy the people, and so

thriving and busy the many signs of commerce. To-day I have seen —, the —, the —, and the —, the latter of whom live at Nervi, fourteen or fifteen miles off, towards Porto Fino. First, of the —. They are just the same, except that Mrs. —'s face is larger and fuller, and her hair rather gray. As I rang at their bell she came out walking, and stared at me. 'What! you don't know me?' said I; upon which she recognised me very warmly, and then said in her old quiet way: 'I expected to find a ruin. We heard you had been so ill; and I find you younger and better-looking than ever. But it's so strange to see you without a bright waistcoat. Why haven't you got a bright waistcoat on?' I apologised for my black one, and was sent upstairs, when B—— presently appeared in a hideous and demoniacal night-dress, having turned out of bed to greet his distinguished countryman. After a long talk, in the course of which I arranged to dine there on Sunday early, before starting by the steamer for Naples, and in which they told me every possible and impossible particular about their minutest affairs, and especially about S——'s marriage, I set off for G——'s. I had found letters from him here, and he had been here over and over again, and had driven out no end of times to the Gate to leave messages for me, and really is (in his strange uncouth way) crying glad to see me. I found him and his wife in a little comfortable country house, overlooking the sea, sitting in a small summer-house on wheels, exactly like a bathing-machine. I found her rather pretty, extraordinarily cold and composed, a mere piece of furniture, *talking broken English*. Through eight months in the year they live in this country place. She never reads, never works, never talks, never gives an order or directs anything, has only a taste for going to the theatre (where she never speaks either) and buying clothes. They sit in the garden all day, dine at four, *smoke their cigars*, go in at eight, sit about till ten, and then go to bed. The greater part of this I had from G—— himself in a particularly unintelligible confidence in the garden, the only portion of which that I could clearly understand were the words 'and one thing and another,' repeated one hundred thousand times. He described himself as being



perfectly happy, and seemed very fond of his wife. 'But that,' said his father-in-law to me this morning, looking like the figure-head of a ship, with a nutmeg-grater for a face, 'that he ought to be, and must be, and is bound to be—he couldn't help it.'

Then I went on to the T——'s, and found them living in a beautiful situation in a ruinous Albaro-like palace. Coming upon them unawares, I found T——, with a pointed beard, smoking a great German pipe, in a pair of slippers; the two little girls very pale and faint from the climate, in a singularly untidy state—one (heaven knows why!) without stockings, and both with their little short hair cropped in a manner never before beheld, and a little bright bow stuck on the top of it. C—— said she had invented this headgear as a picturesque thing, adding that perhaps it was—and perhaps it was not. She was greatly flushed and agitated, but looked very well, and seems to be greatly liked here. We had disturbed her at her painting in oils, and I have rather received an impression that, what with that, and what with music, the household affairs went a little to the wall. T—— was teaching the two little girls the multiplication table in a disorderly old billiard-room, with all manner of maps in it.

Having obtained a gracious permission from the lady of the school, I am going to show my companions the Sala of the Peschiere this morning. It is raining intensely hard in the regular manner, so that I can hardly hope for Genoa's making as fine an impression as I could desire. Our boat for Naples is a large French mail-boat, and we hope to get there on Tuesday or Wednesday. If the day after you receive this you write to the Poste Restante, Rome, it will be the safest course. Friday's letter write Poste Restante, Florence. You refer to a letter you suppose me to have received from Forster—to whom my love. No letter from him has come to hand.

I will resume my report of this place in my next. In the meantime I will not fail to drink dear Katey's health to-day. Edward has just come in with mention of an English boat on Tuesday morning, superior to French boat to-morrow, and

faster. I shall enquire at the Consulate and take the best. When I next write I will give you our route in detail.

I am pleased to hear of Mr. Robson's success in a serious part,<sup>1</sup> as I hope he will now be a fine actor. I hope you will enjoy yourself at Macready's, though I fear it must be sometimes but a melancholy visit.—Good-bye, my dear, and believe me  
Ever most affectionately.

*Sunday, Thirtieth October.*

We leave for Naples to-morrow morning by the Peninsular and Oriental Company's steamer the *Valletta*. I send a sketch of our movements that I have at last been able to make.

Mrs. G—— quite came out yesterday. So did Mrs. B—— (in a different manner), by violently attacking Mrs. T—— for painting ill in oils when she might be playing well on the piano. It rained hard all yesterday, but is finer this morning. We went over the Peschiere in the wet afternoon. The garden is sorely neglected now, and the rooms are all full of boarding-school beds, and most of the fireplaces are closed up, but the old beauty and grandeur of the place were in it still.

I will think of Charley (from whom I have heard here) and soon write to him definitely. At present I think he had better join me at Boulogne. I shall not bring the little boys over, as, if we keep our time, it would be too long before Christmas Day.  
Ever most affectionately yours.

CROCE DI MALTA, GENOA,  
*Saturday, Twenty-ninth October, 1853.*

MY DEAREST GEORGY,—We had thirty-one <sup>Miss</sup> hours consecutively on the road between this and <sup>Hogarth.</sup> Milan, and arrived here in a rather damaged condition. We live at the top of this immense house, overlooking the port and sea, pleasantly and airily enough, though it is no joke to get so high, and though the apartment is rather vast and faded.

The old walks are pretty much the same as ever, except that they have built behind the Peschiere on the San Bar-

<sup>1</sup> 'Desmarests' in Mr. Tom Taylor's play, *Plot and Passion*.



tolomeo hill, and changed the whole town towards San Pietro d'Arena, where we seldom went. The Bisagno looks just the same, strong just now, and with very little water in it. 'Vicoli' stink exactly as they used to, and are fragrant with the same old flavour of very rotten cheese kept in very hot blankets. The Mezzaro pervades them as before. The old Jesuit college in the Strada Nuova is under the present government, the Hôtel de Ville; and a very splendid caffè with a terrace garden has arisen between it and Palavicini's old palace. Another new and handsome caffè has been built in the Piazza Carlo Felice, between the old caffè and the Strada Carlo Felice. The old beastly gate and guard-house on the Albaro road are still in their dear old beastly state, and the whole of the road is just as it was. The man without legs is still in the Strada Nuova; but the beggars in general are all cleared off, and our old one-armed Belisario made a sudden evaporation a year or two ago. I am going to the Peschiere to-day. The puppets are here, and the opera is open, but only with a buffo company, and without a buffet. We went to the Scala, where they did an opera of Verdi's, called *Il Trovatore*, and a poor enough ballet. The whole performance miserable indeed. I wish you were here to take some of the old walks. It is quite strange to walk about alone. Good-bye, my dear Georgy. Pray tell me how Kate is. I rather fancy from her letter, though I scarcely know why, that she is not quite as well as she was at Boulogne. I was charmed with your account of the Plornishghenter and everything and everybody else.

Ever most affectionately yours.

HÔTEL DES ÉTRANGERS, NAPLES,  
Friday Night, Fourth November, 1853.

Miss  
Hogarth.

MY DEAREST GEORGY,—Instead of embarking on Monday at Genoa, we were delayed (in consequence of the boat's being a day later when there are thirty-one days in the month) until Tuesday. Going aboard that morning at half-past nine, we found the steamer more than full of passengers from Marseilles, and in a state of confusion not to be described. We could get no places at the table,



got our dinners how we could on deck, had no berths or sleeping accommodation of any kind, and had paid heavy first-class fares! To add to this, we got to Leghorn too late to steam away again that night, getting the ship's papers examined first—as the authorities said so, not being favourable to the new express English ship, English officered—and we lay off the lighthouse all night long. The scene on board beggars description. Ladies on the tables, gentlemen under the tables, and ladies and gentlemen lying indiscriminately on the open deck, arrayed like spoons on a sideboard. No mattresses, no blankets, nothing. Towards midnight, attempts were made by means of an awning and flags to make this latter scene remotely approach an Australian encampment; and we three lay together on the bare planks covered with overcoats. We were all gradually dozing off when a perfectly tropical rain fell, and in a moment drowned the whole ship. The rest of the night was passed upon the stairs, with an immense jumble of men and women. When anybody came up for any purpose we all fell down; and when anybody came down we all fell up again. Still, the good-humour in the English part of the passengers was quite extraordinary. There were excellent officers aboard, and the first mate lent me his cabin to wash in in the morning, which I afterwards lent to Egg and Collins. Then we and the Emerson Tennents (who were aboard) and the captain, the doctor, and the second officer went off on a jaunt together to Pisa, as the ship was to lie at Leghorn all day.

The captain was a capital fellow, but I led him, facetiously, such a life all day, that I got almost everything altered at night. Emerson Tennent, with the greatest kindness, turned his son out of his state-room (who, indeed, volunteered to go in the most amiable manner), and I got a good bed there. The store-room down by the hold was opened for Egg and Collins, and they slept with the moist sugar, the cheese in cut, the spices, the cruets, the apples and pears—in a perfect Chandler's shop; in company with what the ——'s would call a 'hold gent'—who had been so horribly wet through overnight that his condition frightened the authorities—a cat, and the steward—who dozed in an armchair, and all night



long fell headforemost, once in every five minutes, on Egg, who slept on the counter or dresser. Last night I had the steward's own cabin, opening on deck, all to myself. It had been previously occupied by some desolate lady, who went ashore at Civita Vecchia. There was little or no sea, thank Heaven, all the trip; but the rain was heavier than any I have ever seen, and the lightning very constant and vivid. We were, with the crew, some two hundred people; with boats, at the utmost stretch, for one hundred perhaps, I could not help thinking what would happen if we met with any accident; the crew being chiefly Maltese, and evidently fellows who would cut off alone in the largest boat on the least alarm. The speed (it being the crack express ship for the India mail) very high; also the running through all the narrow rocky channels. Thank God, however, here we are; though the more sensible and experienced part of the passengers agreed with me this morning that it was not a thing to try often. We had an excellent table after the first day, the best wines and so forth, and the captain and I swore eternal friendship. Ditto the first officer and the majority of the passengers. We got into the bay about seven this morning, but could not land until noon. We towed from Civita Vecchia the entire Greek navy, I believe, consisting of a little brig-of-war, with great guns, fitted as a steamer, but disabled by having burst the bottom of her boiler in her first run. She was just big enough to carry the captain and a crew of six or so, but the captain was so covered with buttons and gold that there never would have been room for him on board to put these valuables away if he hadn't worn them, which he consequently did, all night.

Whenever anything was wanted to be done, as slackening the tow-rope or anything of that sort, our officers roared at this miserable potentate, in violent English, through a speaking-trumpet, of which he couldn't have understood a word under the most favourable circumstances, so he did all the wrong things first, and the right things always last. The absence of any knowledge of anything not English on the part of the officers and stewards was most ridiculous. I met an Italian gentleman on the cabin steps, yesterday morning,

vainly endeavouring to explain that he wanted a cup of tea for his sick wife. And when we were coming out of the harbour at Genoa, and it was necessary to order away that boat of music you remember, the chief officer (called aft for the purpose, as 'knowing something of Italian,') delivered himself in this explicit and clear manner to the principal performer: 'Now, signora, if you don't sheer off, you'll be run down; so you had better trice up that guitar of yours, and put about.'

We get on as well as possible, and it is extremely pleasant and interesting, and I feel that the change is doing me great and real service, after a long continuous strain upon the mind; but I am pleased to think that we are at our farthest point, and I look forward with joy to coming home again, to my old room, and the old walks, and all the old pleasant things.

I wish I had arranged, or could have done so—for it would not have been easy—to find some letters here. It is a blank to stay for five days in a place without any.

I am afraid this is a dull letter, for I am very tired. You must take the will for the deed, my dear, and good-night.

Ever most affectionately.

HÔTEL DES ÉTRANGERS, NAPLES,  
*Friday Night, Fourth November, 1853.*

MY DEAREST CATHERINE,—We arrived here at midday—two days after our intended time, under circumstances which I reserve for Georgina's letter, by way of variety—in what Forster used to call good health and sp—p—pirits. We have a charming apartment opposite the sea, a little lower down than the Victoria—in the direction of the San Carlo Theatre—and the windows are now wide open as on an English summer night. The first persons we found on board at Genoa, were Emerson Tennent, Lady Tennent, their son and daughter. They are all here, too, in an apartment over ours, and we have all been constantly together in a very friendly way, ever since our meeting. We dine at the table d'hôte—made a league together on board—and have been mutually agreeable. They have

Mrs.  
Charles  
Dickens.



no servant with them, and have profited by Edward. He goes on perfectly well, is always cheerful and ready, has been sleeping on board (upside down, I believe), in a corner, with his head in the wet and his heels against the side of the paddle-box—but has been perpetually gay and fresh.

As soon as we got our luggage from the custom-house, we packed complete changes in a bag, set off in a carriage for some warm baths, and had a most refreshing cleansing after our long journey. There was an odd Neapolitan attendant—a steady old man—who, bringing the linen into my bath, proposed to ‘soap me.’ Upon which I called out to the other two that I intended to have everything done to me that could be done, and gave him directions accordingly. I was frothed all over with Naples soap, rubbed all down, scrubbed with a brush, had my nails cut, and all manner of extraordinary operations performed. He was as much disappointed (apparently) as surprised not to find me dirty, and kept on ejaculating under his breath, ‘Oh, Heaven! how clean this Englishman is!’ He also remarked that the Englishman is as fair as a beautiful woman. Some relations of Lord John Russell’s, going to Malta, were aboardship, and we were very pleasant. Likewise there was a Mr. Young aboard—an agreeable fellow, not very unlike Forster in person—who introduced himself as the brother of the Miss Youngs whom we knew at Boulogne. He was musical and had much good-fellowship in him, and we were very agreeable together also. On the whole I became decidedly popular, and was embraced on all hands when I came over the side this morning. We are going up Vesuvius, of course, and to Herculaneum and Pompeii, and the usual places. The Tennents will be our companions in most of our excursions, but we shall leave them here behind us. Naples looks just the same as when we left it, except that the weather is much better and brighter.

On the day before we left Genoa, we had another dinner with G—— at his country place. He was the soul of hospitality, and really seems to love me. You would have been quite touched if you could have seen the honest warmth of his affection. On the occasion of this second banquet, Egg made a brilliant mistake that perfectly convulsed us all. I /

had introduced all the games with great success, and we were playing at the 'What advice would you have given that person?' game. The advice was 'Not to bully his fellow-creatures.' Upon which, Egg triumphantly and with the greatest glee, screamed, 'Mr. B——!' utterly forgetting S——'s relationship, which I had elaborately impressed upon him. The effect was perfectly irresistible and uncontrollable; and the little woman's way of humouring the joke was in the best taste and the best sense. While I am upon Genoa I may add, that when we left the Croce the landlord, in hoping that I was satisfied, told me that as I was an old inhabitant, he had charged the prices 'as to a Genoese.' They certainly were very reasonable.

Mr. and Mrs.<sup>1</sup> Sartoris have lately been staying in this house, but are just gone. It is kept by an English waiting-maid who married an Italian courier, and is extremely comfortable and clean. I am getting impatient to hear from you with all home news, and shall be heartily glad to get to Rome, and find my best welcome and interest at the post-office there.

That ridiculous —— and her mother were at the hotel at Leghorn the day before yesterday, where the mother (poor old lady!) was so ill from the fright and anxiety consequent on her daughter's efforts at martyrdom, that it is even doubtful whether she will recover. I learnt from a lady friend of ——, that all this nonsense originated at Nice, where she was stirred up by Free Kirk parsons—itinerant—any one of whom I take her to be ready to make a semi-celestial marriage with. The dear being who told me all about her was a noble specimen—single, forty, in a clinging flounced black silk dress, which wouldn't drape, or bustle, or fall, or do anything of that sort—and with a Leghorn hat on her head, at least (I am serious) *six feet round*. The consequence of its immense size, was, that whereas it had an insinuating blue decoration in the form of a bow in front, it was so out of her knowledge behind, that it was all battered and bent in that direction—and, viewed from that quarter, she looked drunk.

<sup>1</sup> Miss Adelaide Kemble.



My best love to Mamey and Katey, and Sydney the king of the nursery, and Harry and the dear little Plornishghenter. I kiss almost all the children I encounter in remembrance of their sweet faces, and talk to all the mothers who carry them. I hope to hear nothing but good news from you, and to find nothing but good spirits in your expected letter when I come to Rome. I already begin to look homeward, being now at the remotest part of the journey, and to anticipate the pleasure of return.

Ever most affectionately.

ROME, *Sunday Night, Thirteenth November, 1853.*

Miss  
Hogarth.

MY DEAREST GEORGY,—We arrived here yesterday afternoon, at between three and four. On sending to the post-office this morning, I received your pleasant little letter, and one from Miss Coutts, who is still at Paris. But to my amazement there was none from Catherine! You mention her writing, and I cannot but suppose that your two letters must have been posted together. However, I received none from her, and I have all manner of doubts respecting the plainness of its direction. They will not produce the letters here as at Genoa, but persist in looking them out at the post-office for you. I shall send again to-morrow, and every day until Friday, when we leave here.

One night, at Naples, Edward came in, open-mouthed, to the table d'hôte where we were dining with the Tennents, to announce 'The Marchese Garofalo.' I at first thought it must be the little parrot-marquess who was once your escort from Genoa; but I found him to be a man (married to an Englishwoman) whom we used to meet at Ridgway's. He was very glad to see me, and I afterwards met him at dinner at Mr. Lowther's, our chargé d'affaires. Mr. Lowther was at the Rockingham play, and is a very agreeable fellow. We had an exceedingly pleasant dinner of eight, preparatory to which I was near having the ridiculous adventure of not being able to find the house and coming back dinnerless. I went in an open carriage from the hotel in all state, and the coachman, to my surprise, pulled up at the end of the Chiaja. 'Behold the house,' says he, 'of Il Signor Larthoor!'—at the same time pointing with his whip into the seventh heaven,

where the early stars were shining. 'But the Signor Larthoor,' returns the Inimitable darling, 'lives at Pausilippo.' 'It is true,' says the coachman (still pointing to the evening star, 'but he lives high up the Salita Sant' Antonio, where no carriage ever yet ascended, and that is the house' (evening star as aforesaid), 'and one must go on foot. Behold the Salita Sant' Antonio!' I went up it, a mile and a half I should think. I got into the strangest places, among the wildest Neapolitans—kitchens, washing-places, archways, stables, vineyards—was baited by dogs, answered in profoundly unintelligible Neapolitan, from behind lonely locked doors, in cracked female voices, quaking with fear; could hear of no such Englishman or any Englishman. By and by I came upon a Polenta-shop in the clouds, where an old Frenchman, with an umbrella like a faded tropical leaf (it had not rained for six weeks) was staring at nothing at all, with a snuff-box in his hand. To him I appealed concerning the Signor Larthoor. 'Sir,' said he, with the sweetest politeness, 'can you speak French?' 'Sir,' said I, 'a little.' 'Sir,' said he, 'I presume the Signor Lootheere'—you will observe that he changed the name according to the custom of his country—'is an Englishman.' I admitted that he was the victim of circumstances and had that misfortune. 'Sir,' said he, 'one word more. *Has* he a servant with a wooden leg?' 'Great Heaven, sir,' said I, 'how do I know? I should think not, but it is possible.' 'It is always,' said the Frenchman, 'possible. Almost all the things of the world are always possible.' 'Sir,' said I—you may imagine my condition and dismal sense of my own absurdity, by this time—'that is true.' He then took an immense pinch of snuff, wiped the dust off his umbrella, led me to an arch commanding a wonderful view of the bay of Naples, and pointed deep into the earth from which I had mounted. 'Below there, near the lamp, one finds an Englishman, with a servant with a wooden leg. It is always possible that he is the Signor Lootheere.' I had been asked at six, and it was now getting on for seven. I went down again in a state of perspiration and misery not to be described, and without the faintest hope of finding the place. But as I was going down to the lamp, I saw the strangest



staircase up a dark corner, with a man in a white waistcoat (evidently hired) standing on the top of it fuming. I dashed in at a venture, found it was the place, made the most of the whole story, and was indescribably popular. The best of it was, that as nobody ever did find the place, he had put a servant at the bottom of the Salita, to 'wait for an English gentleman.' The servant (as he presently pleaded), deceived by the moustache, had allowed the English gentleman to pass unchallenged.

The night before we left Naples we were at the San Carlo, where, with the Verdi rage of our old Genoa time, they were again doing the *Trovatore*. It seemed rubbish on the whole to me, but was very fairly done. I think 'La Tenco,' the prima donna, will soon be a great hit in London. She is a very remarkable singer and a fine actress, to the best of my judgment on such premises. There seems to be no opera here at present. There was a Festa in St. Peter's to-day, and the Pope passed to the Cathedral in state. We were all there.

We leave here, please God, on Friday morning, and post to Florence in three days and a half. We came here by Vetturino. Upon the whole, the roadside inns are greatly improved since our time. Half-past three and half-past four have been, however, our usual times of rising on the road.

I was in my old place at the Coliseum this morning, and it was as grand as ever. With that exception the ruined part of Rome—the real original Rome—looks smaller than my remembrance made it. It is the only place on which I have yet found that effect. We are in the old hotel.

You are going to Bonchurch I suppose? will be there, perhaps, when this letter reaches you? I shall be pleased to think of you as at home again, and making the commodious family mansion look natural and home-like. I don't like to think of my room without anybody to peep into it now and then. Here is a world of travelling arrangements for me to settle, and here are Collins and Egg looking sideways at me with an occasional imploring glance as beseeching me to settle it. So I leave off. Good-night.—Ever, my dearest Georgy,

Most affectionately yours.

## TO JAMES EMERSON TENNENT 379

HÔTEL DES ÎLES BRITANNIQUES, PIAZZA DEL POPOLO, ROME,  
*Monday, Fourteenth November, 1853.*

MY DEAR TENNENT,—As I never made a good bargain in my life—except once, when, on going abroad, I let my house on excellent terms to an admirable tenant, who never paid anything—I sent Edward into the Casa Dies yesterday morning, while I invested the premises from the outside, and carefully surveyed them. It is a very clean, large, bright-looking house at the corner of Via Gregoriana; not exactly in a part of Rome I should pick out for living in, and on what I should be disposed to call the wrong side of the street. However, this is not to the purpose. Signor Dies has no idea of letting an apartment for a short time—scouted the idea of a month—signified that he could not be brought to the contemplation of two months—was by no means clear that he could come down to the consideration of three. This of course settled the business speedily.

Sir James  
Emerson  
Tennent. /

This hotel is no longer kept by the Melloni I spoke of, but is even better kept than in his time, and is a very admirable house. I have engaged a small apartment for you to be ready on Thursday afternoon. If you would like to change to ours, which is a very good one, on Friday morning, you can of course do so. As our dining-room is large, and there is no table d'hôte here, I will order dinner in it for our united parties at six on Thursday. You will be able to decide how to arrange for the remainder of your stay, after being here and looking about you—two really necessary considerations in Rome.

Pray make my kind regards to Lady Tennent, and Miss Tennent, and your good son, who became homeless for my sake. Mr. Egg and Mr. Collins desire to be also remembered.

It has been beautiful weather since we left Naples, until to-day, when it rains in a very dogged, sullen, downcast, and determined manner. We have been speculating at breakfast on the possibility of its raining in a similar manner at Naples, and of your wandering about the hotel, refusing consolation.



I grieve to report the Orvieto considerably damaged by the general vine failure, but still far from despicable. Montefiascone (the Est wine you know) is to be had here; and we have had one bottle in the very finest condition, and one in a second-rate state.—Believe me always,

Very faithfully yours.

ROME, Monday, Fourteenth November, 1853.

Mrs.  
Charles  
Dickens.

MY DEAREST CATHERINE,—As I have mentioned in my letter to Georgy (written last night but posted with this), I received her letter without yours, to my unbounded astonishment. This morning, on sending again to the post-office, I at last got yours, and most welcome it is with all its contents.

I found Layard at Naples, who went up Vesuvius with us, and was very merry and agreeable. He is travelling with Lord and Lady Somers, and Lord Somers being laid up with an attack of malaria fever, Layard had a day to spare. Craven, who was Lord Normanby's Secretary of Legation in Paris, now lives at Naples, and is married to a French lady. He is very hospitable and hearty, and seemed to have vague ideas that something might be done in a pretty little private theatre he has in his house. He told me of Fanny Kemble and the Sartoris's being here. I have also heard of Thackeray's being here—I don't know how truly. Lockhart<sup>1</sup> is here, and, I fear, very ill. I mean to go and see him.

We are living in the old hotel. I don't know whether you recollect an apartment at the top of the house, to which we once ran up with poor Roche to see the horses start in the race at the Carnival time? That is ours, in which I at present write. We have a large back dining-room, a handsome front drawing-room, looking into the Piazza del Popolo, and three front bedrooms, all on a floor. The whole costs us about four shillings a day each. The hotel is better kept than ever. There is a little kitchen to each apartment where the dinner is kept hot. There is no house comparable to it in Paris, and it is better than Mivart's. We start for Florence, post, on

<sup>1</sup> The son-in-law and biographer of Sir Walter Scott.

Friday morning, and I am bargaining for a carriage to take us on to Venice.

Edward is an excellent servant, and always cheerful and ready for his work. I am perfectly pleased with him, and would rather have him than an older hand. Poor dear Roche comes back to my mind, though, often.

We have had delightful weather, with one day's exception, until to-day, when it rained very heavily and suddenly. Egg and Collins have gone to the Vatican, and I am 'going' to try whether I can hit out anything for the Christmas number.

I have not come across any English whom I know except Layard and the Emerson Tennents, who will be here on Thursday from Civita Vecchia, and are to dine with us. The losses up to this point have been two pairs of shoes (one mine and one Egg's), Collins' snuff-box, and Egg's dressing-gown.

We observe the managerial punctuality in all our arrangements, and have not had any difference whatever.

I introduced myself to Salvatore at Vesuvius, and reminded him of the night when poor Le Gros fell down the mountains. He was full of interest directly, remembered the very hole, put on his gold-banded cap, and went up with us himself. He did not know that Le Gros was dead, and was very sorry to hear it. He asked after the ladies, and hoped they were very happy, to which I answered 'Very.' The cone is completely changed since our visit, is not at all recognisable as the same place; and there is no fire from the mountain, though there is a great deal of smoke. Its last demonstration was in 1850.

I shall be glad to think of your all being at home again; as I suppose you will be soon after the receipt of this. I shall be very happy to be at home again myself, and to embrace you; for of course I miss you *very much*, though I feel that I could not have done a better thing to clear my mind and freshen it up again, than make this expedition. If I find Charley much ahead of me, I shall start on through a night or so to meet him, and leave the others to catch us up. I look upon the journey as almost closed at Turin. My best love to Mamey, and Katey, and Sydney, and Harry, and the darling Plornishghenter. We often talk about them, and



## 382 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

both my companions do so with interest. They always send all sorts of messages to you, which I never deliver. God bless you! Take care of yourself.

Ever most affectionately.

ROME, *Thursday Afternoon, Seventeenth November, 1853.*

Mr. W. H.  
Wills.

MY DEAR WILLS,—Just as I wrote the last words of the enclosed little story for the Christmas number just now, Edward brought in your letter. Also one from Forster (tell him) which I have not yet opened. I will write again—and write to him—from Florence. I am delighted to have news of you.

The enclosed little paper for the Christmas number is in a character that nobody else is likely to hit, and which is pretty sure to be considered pleasant. Let Forster have the MS. with the proof, and I know he will correct it to the minutest point. I have a notion of another little story, also for the Christmas number. If I can do it at Venice, I will, and send it straight on. But it is not easy to work under these circumstances. In travelling we generally get up about three; and in resting we are perpetually roaming about in all manner of places. Not to mention my being laid hold of by all manner of people.

KEEP 'HOUSEHOLD WORDS' IMAGINATIVE! is the solemn and continual Conductorial Injunction. Delighted to hear of Mrs. Gaskell's contributions.

In making up the Christmas number, don't consider my paper or papers, with any reference saving to where they will fall best. I have no liking, in the case, for any particular place.

All perfectly well. Companion moustaches (particularly Egg's) dismal in the extreme.

Ever faithfully.

FLORENCE, *Monday, Twenty-first November, 1853.*

H. W.

Mr. W. H.  
Wills.

MY DEAR WILLS,—I sent you by post from Rome, on Wednesday last, a little story for the Christmas number, called 'The Schoolboy's Story.' I have

an idea of another short one to be called 'Nobody's Story,' which I hope to be able to do at Venice, and to send you straight home before this month is out. I trust you have received the first safely.

Edward continues to do extremely well. He is always, early and late, what you have seen him. He is a very steady fellow, a little too bashful for a courier even; settles prices of everything now, as soon as we come into an hotel; and improves fast. His knowledge of Italian is painfully defective, and, in the midst of a howling crowd at a post-house or railway station, this deficiency perfectly stuns him. I was obliged last night to get out of the carriage, and pluck him from a crowd of porters who were putting our baggage into wrong conveyances—by cursing and ordering about in all directions. I should think about ten substantives, the names of ten common objects, form his whole Italian stock. It matters very little at the hotels, where a great deal of French is spoken now; but, on the road, if none of his party knew Italian, it would be a very serious inconvenience indeed.

Will you write to Ryland if you have not heard from him, and ask him what the Birmingham reading-nights are really to be? For it is ridiculous enough that I positively don't know. Can't a Saturday Night in a Truck District, or a Sunday Morning among the Ironworkers (a fine subject) be knocked out in the course of the same visit?

If you should see any managing man you know in the Oriental and Peninsular Company, I wish you would very gravely mention to him from me that if they are not careful what they are about with their steamship *Valletta*, between Marseilles and Naples, they will suddenly find that they will receive a blow one fine day in the *Times*, which it will be a very hard matter for them ever to recover. When I sailed in her from Genoa, there had been taken on board, *with no caution in most cases from the agent, or hint of discomfort*, at least forty people of both sexes for whom there was no room whatever. I am a pretty old traveller as you know, but I never saw anything like the manner in which pretty women were compelled to lie among the men in the great cabin and on the bare decks. The good humour was beyond



all praise, but the natural indignation very great; and I was repeatedly urged to stand up for the public in *Household Words*, and to write a plain description of the facts to the *Times*. If I had done either, and merely mentioned that all these people paid heavy first-class fares, I will answer for it that they would have been beaten off the station in a couple of months. I did neither, because I was the best of friends with the captain and all the officers, and never saw such a fine set of men; so admirable in the discharge of their duty, and so zealous to do their best by everybody. It is impossible to praise them too highly. But there is a strong desire at all the ports along the coast to throw impediments in the way of the English service, and to favour the French and Italian boats. In these boats (which I know very well) great care is taken of the passengers, and the accommodation is very good. If the Peninsular and Oriental add to all this the risk of such an exposure as they are *certain* to get (if they go on so) in the *Times*, they are dead sure to get a blow from the public which will make them stagger again. I say nothing of the number of the passengers and the room in the ship's boats, though the frightful consideration the contrast presented must have been in more minds than mine. I speak only of the taking people for whom there is no sort of accommodation as the most decided swindle, and the coolest, I ever did with my eyes behold.—Ever, my dear Wills,

Faithfully yours.

VENICE, *Friday, Twenty-fifth November, 1853.*

Miss  
Hogarth.

MY DEAREST GEORGY,—We found an English carriage from Padua at Florence, and hired it to bring it back again. We travelled post with four horses all the way (from Padua to this place there is a railroad) and travelled all night. We left Florence at half-past six in the morning, and got to Padua at eleven next day—yesterday. The cold at night was most intense. I don't think I have ever felt it colder. But our carriage was very comfortable, and we had some wine and some rum to keep us warm. We came by Bologna (where we had tea) and Ferrara. You may imagine the delays in the night when I tell you that each

of our passports, after receiving *six visés* at Florence, received in the course of the one night, *nine more*, every one of which was written and sealed; somebody being slowly knocked out of bed to do it every time! It really was excruciating.

Landor had sent me a letter to his son, and on the day before we left Florence I thought I would go out to Fiesoli and leave it. So I got a little one-horse open carriage and drove off alone. We were within half a mile of the Villa Landoro, and were driving down a very narrow lane like one of those at Albaro, when I saw an elderly lady coming towards us, very well dressed in silk of the Queen's blue, and walking freshly and briskly against the wind at a good round pace. It was a bright, cloudless, very cold day, and I thought she walked with great spirit, as if she enjoyed it. I also thought (perhaps that was having him in my mind) that her ruddy face was shaped like Landor's. All of a sudden the coachman pulls up, and looks inquiringly at me. 'What's the matter?' says I. 'Ecco la Signora Landoro?' says he. 'For the love of Heaven, don't stop,' says I. 'I don't know her, I am only going to the house to leave a letter—go on!' Meanwhile she (still coming on) looked at me, and I looked at her, and we were both a good deal confused, and so went our several ways. Altogether, I think it was as disconcerting a meeting as I ever took part in, and as odd a one. Under any other circumstances I should have introduced myself, but the separation made the circumstances so peculiar that 'I didn't like.'

The Plornishghenter is evidently the greatest, noblest, finest, cleverest, brightest, and most brilliant of boys. Your account of him is most delightful, and I hope to find another letter from you somewhere on the road, making me informed of his demeanour on your return. On which occasion, as on every other, I have no doubt he will have distinguished himself as an irresistibly attracting, captivating May-Roon-Ti-Goon-Ter. Give him a good many kisses for me. I quite agree with Syd as to his ideas of paying attention to the old gentleman. It's not bad, but deficient in originality. The usual deficiency of an inferior intellect with so great a model



before him. I am very curious to see whether the Plorn remembers me on my reappearance.

I meant to have gone to work this morning, and to have tried a second little story for the Christmas number of *Household Words*, but my letters have (most pleasantly) put me out, and I defer all such wise efforts until to-morrow. Egg and Collins are out in a gondola with a 'servitore di piazza.'

You will find this but a stupid letter, but I really have no news. We go to the opera, whenever there is one, see sights, eat and drink, sleep in a natural manner two or three nights, and move on again. Edward was a little crushed at Padua yesterday. He had been extraordinarily cold all night in the rumble, and had got out our clothes to dress, and I think must have been projecting a five or six hours' sleep, when I announced that he was to come on here in an hour and a half to get the rooms and order dinner. He fell into a sudden despondency of the profoundest kind, but was quite restored when we arrived here between eight and nine. We found him waiting at the Custom House with a gondola in his usual brisk condition.

It is extraordinary how few English we see. With the exception of a gentlemanly young fellow (in a consumption I am afraid), married to the tiniest little girl, in a brown straw hat, and travelling with his sister and her sister, and a consumptive single lady, travelling with a maid and a Scotch terrier christened Trotty Veck, we have scarcely seen any, and have certainly spoken to none, since we left Switzerland. These were aboard the *Valletta*, where the captain and I indulged in all manner of insane suppositions concerning the straw hat—the 'Little Matron' we called her; by which name she soon became known all over the ship. The day we entered Rome, and the moment we entered it, there was the Little Matron, alone with antiquity—and Murray—on the wall. The very first church I entered, there was the Little Matron. On the last afternoon, when I went alone to St. Peter's, there was the Little Matron and her party. The best of it is, that I was extremely intimate with them, invited them to Tavistock House when they come home in the spring, and have not the faintest idea of their name.

There was no table d'hôte at Rome, or at Florence, but there is one here, and we dine at it to-day, so perhaps we may stumble upon somebody. I have heard from Charley this morning, who appoints (wisely) Paris as our place of meeting. I had a letter from Coote,<sup>1</sup> at Florence, informing me that his volume of *Household Songs*, was ready, and requesting permission to dedicate it to me. Which of course I gave.

I am beginning to think of the Birmingham readings. I suppose you won't object to be taken to hear them? This is the last place at which we shall make a stay of more than one day. We shall stay at Parma one, and at Turin one, and then we shall come hard and fast home. I feel almost there already, and shall be delighted to close the pleasant trip, and get back to my own Piccola Camera—if, being English, you understand what *that* is. I will not wait over to-morrow, tell Kate, for her letter; but will write then, whether or no.—Ever, my dearest Georgy,

Most affectionately yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Nineteenth December*, 1853.

MY DEAR MARCUS,—You made an excellent sketch from a book of mine which I have received Mr. Marcus Stone. (and have preserved) with great pleasure. Will you accept from me, in remembrance of it, *this* little book? I believe it to be true, though it may be sometimes not as genteel as history has a habit of being. Faithfully yours.

1854

#### NARRATIVE

THE summer of this year was also spent at Boulogne, M. Beaucourt being again the landlord; but the house, though still on the same 'property,' stood on the top of the hill, above the Moulineaux, and was called the Villa du Camp de Droite.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Charles Coote, a gentleman for whom Charles Dickens had a great regard and respect, travelled with the amateur company, as director of the music.



In the early part of the year Charles Dickens paid several visits to the English provinces, giving readings from his books at many of the large manufacturing towns, and always for some good and charitable purpose.

He was still at work upon *Hard Times*, which was finished during the summer, and was constantly occupied with *Household Words*. Many of the letters for this year are to the contributors to this journal. The last is an unusually interesting one. He had for some time past been much charmed with the writings of a certain Miss Berwick, who he knew to be a contributor under a feigned name. When at last the lady confided her real name, and he discovered in the young poetess the daughter of his dear friends, Mr.<sup>1</sup> and Mrs. Procter, the 'new sensation' caused him intense surprise, and the greatest pleasure and delight. Miss Adelaide Procter was, from this time, a frequent contributor to *Household Words*, more especially to the Christmas numbers.

There are really very few letters in this year requiring any explanation—many explaining themselves, and many having allusion to incidents in the past year, which have been duly noted by us for 1853.

The portrait mentioned in the letter to Mr. Collins, for which Charles Dickens was sitting to Mr. E. M. Ward, R.A., was to be one of a series of oil sketches of the then celebrated literary men of the day, in their studies. We believe this portrait to be now in the possession of Mrs. Ward.

In explanation of the letter to Mr. John Saunders on the subject of the production of the latter's play, called *Love's Martyrdom*, we will give the dramatist's own words:

'Having printed for private circulation a play entitled *Love's Martyrdom*, and for which I desired to obtain the independent judgment of some of our most eminent literary men, before seeking the ordeal of the stage, I sent a copy to Mr. Dickens, and the letter in question is his acknowledgment.

.   .   .   .   .   .   .

'He immediately took steps for the introduction of the

<sup>1</sup> The poet 'Barry Cornwall.'

play to the theatre. At first he arranged with Mr. Phelps, of Sadler's Wells, but subsequently, with that gentleman's consent, removed it to the Haymarket. There it was played with Miss Helen Faucit in the character of Margaret, Miss Swanborough (who shortly after married and left the stage) as Julia, Mr. Barry Sullivan as Franklyn, and Mr. Howe as Laneham.

'As far as the play itself was concerned, it was received on all sides as a genuine dramatic and poetic success, achieved, however, as an eminent critic came to my box to say, through greater difficulties than he had ever before seen a dramatic work pass through. The time has not come for me to speak freely of these, but I may point to two of them: the first being the inadequate rehearsals, which caused Mr. Dickens to tell me on the stage, four or five days only before the first performance, that the play was not then in as good a state as it would have been in at Paris three weeks earlier. The other was the breakdown of a performer of a most important secondary part; a collapse so absolute that he was changed by the management before the second representation of the piece.'

This ill-luck of the beginning pursued the play to its close.

'The Haymarket Theatre was at the time in the very lowest state of prostration, through the Crimean War; the habitual frequenters were lovers of comedy, and enjoyers of farce and burlesque; and there was neither the money nor the faith to call to the theatre by the usual methods, vigorously and discriminatingly pursued, the multitudes that I believed could have been so called to a better and more romantic class of comedy.

'Even under these and other similarly depressing circumstances, the nightly receipts were about £60, the expenses being £80; and on the last—an author's—night, there was an excellent and enthusiastic house, yielding to the best of my recollection, about £140, but certainly between £120 and £140. And with that night—the sixth or seventh—the experiment ended.'



TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Seventh January, 1854.*Mr. Walter  
Savage  
Landor.

MY DEAR LANDOR,—I heartily assure you that to have your name coupled with anything I have done is an honour and a pleasure to me. I cannot say that I am sorry that you should have thought it necessary to write to me, for it is always delightful to me to see your hand, and to know (though I want no outward and visible sign as an assurance of the fact) that you are ever the same generous, earnest, gallant man.

Catherine and Georgina send their kind loves. So does Walter Landor, who came home from school with high judicial commendation and a prize into the bargain.—Ever, my dear Landor,

Affectionately yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Friday, Thirteenth January, 1854.*The Hon.  
Mrs.  
Watson.

MY DEAR MRS. WATSON,—On the very day after I sent the Christmas number to Rockingham, I heard of your being at Brighton. I should have sent another there, but that I had a misgiving I might seem to be making too much of it. For, when I thought of the probability of the Rockingham copy going on to Brighton, and pictured to myself the advent of two of those very large envelopes at once at Junction House at breakfast time, a sort of comic modesty overcame me. I was heartily pleased with the Birmingham audience, which was a very fine one. I never saw, nor do I suppose anybody ever did, such an interesting sight as the working-people's night. There were two thousand five hundred of them there, and a more delicately observant audience it is impossible to imagine. They lost nothing, misinterpreted nothing, followed everything closely, laughed and cried with most delightful earnestness, and animated me to that extent that I felt as if we were all bodily going up into the clouds together. It is an enormous place for the purpose; but I had considered all that carefully, and I believe made the most distant person hear as well as if I had been reading in my own room. I was a little doubtful before I began on the first night whether it was quite practicable to conceal the requisite effort; but I soon had the satisfaction of finding that it was, and that we were all going on

together, in the first page, as easily, to all appearance, as if we had been sitting round the fire.

Few things that I saw, when I was away, took my fancy so much as the Electric Telegraph, piercing, like a sunbeam, right through the cruel old heart of the Coliseum at Rome. And on the summit of the Alps, among the eternal ice and snow, there it was still, with its posts sustained against the sweeping mountain winds by clusters of great beams—to say nothing of its being at the bottom of the sea as we crossed the Channel.—Ever, my dear Mrs. Watson,

Most faithfully yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, LONDON, *Thirteenth January*, 1854.

MY DEAR SIR,—I beg, through you, to assure the artisans' committee in aid of the Birmingham and Midland Institute, that I have received the resolution they have done me the honour to agree upon for themselves and their fellow-workmen, with the highest gratification. I awakened no pleasure or interest among them at Birmingham which they did not repay to me with abundant interest. I have their welfare and happiness sincerely at heart, and shall ever be their faithful friend.

Mr.  
Frederick  
Grew.<sup>1</sup>

Your obedient Servant.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Monday, Sixteenth January*, 1854.

MY DEAR MARY,—It is all very well to pretend to love me as you do. Ah! If you loved as I love, Mary! But, when my breast is tortured by the perusal of such a letter as yours, Falkland, Falkland, madam, becomes my part in *The Rivals*, and I play it with desperate earnestness.

Miss Mary  
Boyle.

As thus:

FALKLAND (*to ACRES*). Then you see her, sir, sometimes?

ACRES. See her! Odds beams and sparkles, yes. See her acting! Night after night.

FALKLAND (*aside and furious*). Death and the devil! Acting,

<sup>1</sup> Secretary to the Artisans' Committee in aid of the Birmingham and Midland Institute.



and I not there! Pray, sir (*with constrained calmness*), what does she act?

ACRES. Odds, monthly nurses and babbies! Sairey Gamp and Betsy Prig, 'which, wotever it is, my dear (*mimicking*), I likes it brought reg'lar and draw'd mild!' *That's* very like her.

FALKLAND. Confusion! Laceration! Perhaps, sir, perhaps she sometimes acts—ha! ha! perhaps she sometimes acts, I say—eh! sir?—a—ha, ha, ha! a fairy? (*With great bitterness.*)

ACRES. Odds, gauzy pinions and spangles, yes! You should hear her sing as a fairy. You should see her dance as a fairy. Tol de rol lol—la—lol—liddle diddle. (*Sings and dances.*) *That's* very like her.

FALKLAND. Misery! while I, devoted to her image, can scarcely write a line now and then, or pensively read aloud to the people of Birmingham. (*To him.*) And they applaud her, no doubt they applaud her, sir. And she—I see her! Curtsies and smiles! And they—curses on them! they laugh and—ha, ha, ha! and clap their hands—and say it's very good. Do they not say it's very good, sir? Tell me. Do they not?

ACRES. Odds, thunderings and pealings, of course they do! and the third fiddler, little Tweaks, of the county town, goes into fits. Ho, ho, ho, I can't bear it (*mimicking*); take me out! Ha, ha, ha! O what a one she is! She'll be the death of me. Ha, ha, ha, ha! *That's* very like her!

FALKLAND. Damnation! Heartless Mary! (*Rushes out.*)

Scene opens, and discloses coals of fire, heaped up into form of letters, representing the following inscription:

When the praise thou meetest  
To thine ear is sweetest,  
O then

REMEMBER JOE!

(*Curtain Falls.*)

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Monday, Sixteenth January, 1854.

M. De  
Cerjat.

MY DEAR CERJAT,—Guilty. The accused pleads guilty, but throws himself upon the mercy of the court. He humbly represents that his usual hour for getting up, in the course of his travels, was three o'clock in the morning, and his usual hour for going to bed, nine or ten the next night. That the places in which he chiefly deviated from these rules of hardship, were Rome and Venice;

and that at those cities of fame he shut himself up in solitude, and wrote Christmas papers for the incomparable publication known as *Household Words*. That his correspondence at all times, arising out of the business of the said *Household Words* alone, was very heavy. But his offence, though undoubtedly committed, was unavoidable, and that a nominal punishment will meet the justice of the case.

We had only three bad days out of the whole time. After Naples, which was very hot, we had very cold, clear, bright weather. When we got to Chamounix, we found the greater part of the inns shut up and the people gone. No visitors whatsoever, and plenty of snow. These were the very best circumstances under which to see the place, and we stayed a couple of days at the Hôtel de Londres (hastily re-furbished for our entertainment), and climbed through the snow to the Mer de Glace, and thoroughly enjoyed it. Then we went, in mule procession (I walking), to the old hotel at Martigny, where Collins was ill, and I suppose I bored Egg to death by talking all the evening about the time when you and I were there together. Naples (a place always painful to me, in the intense degradation of the people) seems to have only three classes of inhabitants left in it—priests, soldiers (standing army one hundred thousand strong), and spies. Of macaroni we ate very considerable quantities everywhere; also, for the benefit of Italy, we took our share of every description of wine. At Naples, I found Layard, the Nineveh traveller, who is a friend of mine and an admirable fellow; so we fraternised and went up Vesuvius together, and ate more macaroni and drank more wine. At Rome, the day after our arrival, they were making a saint at St. Peter's; on which occasion I was surprised to find what an immense number of pounds of wax candles it takes to make the regular, genuine article. From Turin to Paris, over the Mont Cenis, we made only one journey. The Rhone, being frozen and foggy, was not to be navigated, so we posted from Lyons to Chalons, and everybody else was doing the like, and there were no horses to be got, and we were stranded at midnight in amazing little cabarets, with nothing worth mentioning to eat in them, except the iron stove, which was rusty, and the billiard-table,



which was musty. We left Turin on a Tuesday evening, and arrived in Paris on a Friday evening; where I found my son Charley, hot—or I should rather say cold—from Germany, with his arms and legs so grown out of his coat and trousers, that I was ashamed of him, and was reduced to the necessity of taking him, under cover of night, to a ready-made establishment in the Palais Royal, where they put him into balloon-waisted pantaloons, and increased my confusion. Leaving Calais on the evening of Sunday, the Tenth of December; fact of distinguished author's being aboard, was telegraphed to Dover; thereupon authorities of Dover Railway detained train to London for distinguished author's arrival, rather to the exasperation of British public. D. A. arrived at home between ten and eleven that night, thank God, and found all well and happy.

I think you see the *Times*, and if so, you will have seen a very graceful and good account of the Birmingham readings. It was the most remarkable thing that England could produce, I think, in the way of a vast intelligent assemblage; and the success was most wonderful and prodigious—perfectly overwhelming and astounding altogether. They wound up by giving my wife a piece of plate, having given me one before; and when you come to dine here (may it be soon!) it shall be duly displayed in the centre of the table.

Tell Mrs. Cerjat, to whom my love, and all our loves, that I have highly excited them at home here by giving them an account in detail of all your daughters; further, that the way in which Catherine and Georgina have questioned me and cross-questioned me about you all, notwithstanding, is maddening. Mrs. Watson has been obliged to pass her Christmas at Brighton alone with her younger children, in consequence of her two eldest boys coming home to Rockingham from school with the whooping-cough. The quarantine expires to-day, however; and she drives here, on her way back into Northamptonshire, to-morrow.

The sad affair of the Preston strike remains unsettled; and I hear, on strong authority, that if that were settled, the Manchester people are prepared to strike next. Provisions very dear, but the people very temperate and quiet





another in the whole area of England, is not more than four miles. Bah! What have you to do with these?

I shall put the book upon a private shelf (after reading it), by *Once upon a Time*. I should have buried my pipe of peace and sent you this blast of my war-horn three or four days ago, but that I had been reading to a little audience of three thousand five hundred at Bradford.

Ever affectionately yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Eighteenth February*, 1854.

Mrs.  
Gaskell.

MY DEAR MRS. GASKELL,—I am sorry to say that I am not one of the Zoologicals, or I should have been delighted to have had a hand in the introduction of a child to the lions and tigers. But Wills shall send up to the gardens this morning, and see if Mr. Mitchell, the secretary, can be found. If he be producible, I have no doubt that I can send you what you want in the course of the day.

Such has been the distraction of *my* mind in *my* story, that I have twice forgotten to tell you how much I liked the Modern Greek Songs. The article is printed and at press for the very next number as ever is.

Don't put yourself out at all as to the division of the story into parts; I think you had better write it in your own way. When we come to get a little of it into type, I have no doubt of being able to make such little suggestions as to breaks of chapters as will carry us over all that easily.—My dear Mrs. Gaskell,

Always faithfully yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Friday Night, Twenty-fourth February*, 1854.

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

MY DEAR COLLINS,—Sitting reading to-night, it comes into my head to say that if you look into Montaigne's *Journey into Italy* (not much known now, I think, except to readers), you will find some passages that would be curious for extract. They are very well translated into a sounding kind of old English in Hazlitt's translation of Montaigne.

If you are disengaged next Saturday, March the 4th, and

it should be a fine day, what do you say to making it the occasion for our Rochester trip?

Faithfully yours always.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Tuesday, Seventh March, 1854.*

MY DEAR WHITE,—I am tardy in answering Rev. James White. your letter; but *Hard Times*, and an immense amount of enforced correspondence, are my excuse. To you a sufficient one, I know.

As I should judge from outward and visible appearances, I have exactly as much chance of seeing the Russian fleet reviewed by the Czar as I have of seeing the English fleet reviewed by the Queen.

‘Club Law’ made me laugh very much when I went over it in the proof yesterday. It is most capitally done, and not (as I feared it might be) too directly. It is in the next number but one.

Mrs. — has gone stark mad—and stark naked—on the spirit-rapping imposition. She was found t’other day in the street, clothed only in her chastity, a pocket-handkerchief and a visiting-card. She had been informed, it appeared, by the spirits, that if she went out in that trim she would be invisible. She is now in a madhouse, and, I fear, hopelessly insane. One of the curious manifestations of her disorder is that she can bear nothing black. There is a terrific business to be done, even when they are obliged to put coals on her fire.

— has a thing called a Psycho-grapher, which writes at the dictation of spirits. It delivered itself, a few nights ago, of this extraordinarily lucid message:

X. Y. Z.!

upon which it was gravely explained by the true believers that ‘the spirits were out of temper about something.’ Said — had a great party on Sunday, when it was rumoured ‘a count was going to raise the dead.’ I stayed till the ghostly hour, but the rumour was unfounded, for neither count nor plebeian came up to the spiritual scratch. It is really inex-



plicable to me that a man of his calibre can be run away with by such small deer.

*Á propos* of spiritual messages comes in Georgina, and, hearing that I am writing to you, delivers the following enigma to be conveyed to Mrs. White:

‘Wyon of the Mint lives *at* the Mint.’

Feeling my brain going after this, I only trust it with  
loves from all to all. Ever faithfully.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Seventeenth March*, 1854.

Mr. Charles Knight.

Mr. Charles Knight. MY DEAR KNIGHT,—I have read the article with much interest. It is most conscientiously done, and presents a great mass of curious information condensed into a surprisingly small space.

I have made a slight note or two here and there, with a soft pencil, so that a touch of indiarubber will make all blank again.

And I earnestly entreat your attention to the point (I have been working upon it, weeks past, in *Hard Times*) which I have jocosely suggested on the last page but one. The English are, so far as I know, the hardest-worked people on whom the sun shines. Be content, if, in their wretched intervals of pleasure, they read for amusement and do no worse. They are born at the oar, and they live and die at it. Good God, what would we have of them!

Affectionately yours always.

OFFICE OF 'HOUSEHOLD WORDS,'  
No. 16 WELLINGTON STREET, NORTH STRAND,  
*Wednesday, Twelfth April, 1854.*

Mr. W. H.  
Wills.

Mr. W. H. Wills. I know all the walks for many and many miles round about Malvern, and delightful walks they are. I suppose you are already getting very stout, very red, very jovial (in a physical point of view) altogether.

Mark and I walked to Dartford from Greenwich, last Monday, and found Mrs. — acting *The Stranger* (with a strolling company from the Standard Theatre) in Mr. Munn's schoolroom. The stage was a little wider than your table here, and its surface was composed of loose boards laid

on the school forms. Dogs sniffed about it during the performances, and *the* carpenter's high-lows were ostentatiously taken off and displayed in the proscenium.

We stayed until a quarter to ten, when we were obliged to fly to the railroad, but we sent the landlord of the hotel down with the following articles:

1	bottle	superior	old port,
1	do.	do.	golden sherry,
1	do.	do.	best French Brandy,
1	do.	do.	1st quality old Tom gin,
1	do.	do.	prime Jamaica rum,
1	do.	do.	small still Isla whiskey,
1	kettle	boiling	water, two pounds finest white
			lump sugar,

Our cards,

1 lemon,

and

Our compliments.

The effect we had previously made upon the theatrical company by being beheld in the first two chairs—there was nearly a pound in the house—was altogether electrical.

My ladies send their kindest regards, and are disappointed at your not saying that you drink two-and-twenty tumblers of the limpid element every day. The children also unite in 'loves,' and the Plornishghenter, on being asked if he would send his, replies 'Yes—man,' which we understand to signify cordial acquiescence.

Forster just come back from lecturing at Sherborne. Describes said lecture as 'Blaze of Triumph.'

#### H. W. AGAIN

Miss—I mean Mrs.—Bell's story very nice. I have sent it to the printer, and entitled it 'The Green Ring and the Gold Ring.'

This apartment looks desolate in your absence; but, O Heavens, how tidy!

Mrs. Wills supposed to have gone into a convent at Somers Town.—My dear Wills,

Ever faithfully yours.



## 400 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Saturday Night, Fifteenth April, 1854.*

Mr. B. W.  
Procter.

MY DEAR PROCTER,—I have read *The Fatal Revenge*. Don't do what the minor theatrical people call 'despi-ser' me, but I think it's very bad. The concluding narrative is by far the most meritorious part of the business. Still, the people are so very convulsive and tumble down so many places, and are always knocking other people's bones about in such a very irrational way, that I object. The way in which earthquakes won't swallow the monsters, and volcanoes in eruption won't boil them, is extremely aggravating. Also their habit of bolting when they are going to explain anything.

You have sent me a very different and a much better book; and for that I am truly grateful. With the dust of 'Maturin' in my eyes, I sat down and read 'The Death of Friends,' and the dust melted away in some of those tears it is good to shed. I remember to have read 'The Back-room Window' some years ago, and I have associated it with you ever since. It is a most delightful paper. But the two volumes are all delightful, and I have put them on a shelf where you sit down with Charles Lamb again, with Talfourd's vindication of him hard by.

We never meet. I hope it is not irreligious, but in this strange London I have an inclination to adapt a portion of the Church Service to our common experience. Thus:

'We have left unmet the people whom we ought to have met, and we have met the people whom we ought not to have met, and there seems to be no help in us.'

But I am always, my dear Procter

(At a distance),

Very cordially yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Twenty-first April, 1854.*

Mrs.  
Gaskell.

MY DEAR MRS. GASKELL,—I safely received the paper from Mr. Shaen, welcoming it with three cheers, and instantly despatched it to the printer, who has it in hand now.

I have no intention of striking. The monstrous claims at domination made by a certain class of manufacturers, and

the extent to which the way is made easy for working men to slide down into discontent under such hands, are within my scheme; but I am not going to strike, so don't be afraid of me. But I wish you would look at the story yourself, and judge where and how near I seem to be approaching what you have in your mind. The first two months of it will show that. I will 'make my will' on the first favourable occasion. We were playing games last night, and were fearfully clever.—Always, my dear Mrs. Gaskell,

Faithfully yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Monday, Twenty-fourth April, 1854.*

MY DEAR COLLINS,—I met the Colonel at the Water Colours on Saturday, and asked him if he would assist in scattering the family dinner next Sunday at half-past five, as usual. Will you join us, Sir?

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

Beaucourt's house above the Moulineaux, on the top of the hill—free and windy—not so bijou-ish, but larger rooms, and possessing a back gate and a field, secured by the undersigned contracting party from the middle of June to the middle of October. I hope you will write the third volume of 'that' book there.

[Chauncy Hare] Townshend coming to town on the 12th of May. Pray heaven he may not have another choral birthday, and another frolicultural<sup>1</sup> cauliflower.

Ever faithfully.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Friday Evening, Nineteenth May, 1854.*

MY DEAR HARNESS,—On Thursday, the first of June, we shall be delighted to come. (Might I ask for the mildest whisper of the dinner-hour?) I am more than ever devoted to your niece, if possible, for giving me the choice of two days, as on the second of June I am a fettered mortal.

Rev. W.  
Harness.

I heard a manly, Christian sermon last Sunday at the Foundling—with *great satisfaction*. If you should happen to know the preacher of it, pray thank him from me.

Ever cordially yours.

<sup>1</sup> I think this word a bold one. It is intended for floricultural.—C. D.



TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Twenty-sixth May*, 1854.Rev. James  
White.

MY DEAR WHITE,—Here is Conolly<sup>1</sup> in a dreadful state of mind because you won't dine with him on the seventh of June next to meet Stratford-on-Avon people, writing to me, to ask me to write to you and ask you what you mean by it.

What *do* you mean by it?

It appears to Conolly that your supposing you *can* have anything to do is a clear case of monomania, one of the slight instances of perverted intellect, wherein a visit to him cannot fail to be beneficial. After conference with my learned friend I am of the same opinion.

Ever faithfully yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Thirtieth May*, 1854.Mr. Frank  
Stone,  
A.R.A.

MY DEAR STONE,—I *cannot* stand a total absence of ventilation, and I should have liked (in an amiable and persuasive manner) to have punched T——'s head, and opened the register stoves. I saw the supper tables, sir, in an empty state, and was charmed with them. Likewise I recovered myself from a swoon, occasioned by long contact with an unventilated man of a strong flavour from Copenhagen, by drinking an unknown species of celestial lemonade in that enchanted apartment.

I am grieved to say that on Saturday I stand engaged to dine, at three weeks' notice, with one B——, a man who has read every book that ever was written, and is a perfect gulf of information. Before exploding a mine of knowledge he has a habit of closing one eye and wrinkling up his nose, so that he seems perpetually to be taking aim at you and knocking you over with a terrific charge. Then he looks again, and takes another aim. So you are always on your back, with your legs in the air.

How can a man be conversed with, or walked with, in the county of Middlesex, when he is reviewing the Kentish Militia on the shores of Dover, or sailing, every day for three weeks, between Dover and Calais? Ever affectionately.

<sup>1</sup> The well-known Dr. Conolly, of Hanwell.

PS.—*Humphry Clinker* is certainly Smollett's best. I am rather divided between *Peregrine Pickle* and *Roderick Random*, both extraordinarily good in their way, which is a way without tenderness; but you will have to read them both, and I send the first volume of *Peregrine* as the richer of the two.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Sixth June*, 1854.

MY DEAR COLLINS:

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

Form of trip appointment, in compliance with Act of Parliament. Victoria, cap. 7, sec. 304.

Day,	Thursday.
Hour,	Quarter past 11 A.M.
Place,	Dover Terminus, London Bridge.
Destination, Tunbridge Wells.	
Description of Railway Qualification, Return Ticket.	
(Signed) Entd.	CHARLES DICKENS.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Seventh June*, 1854.

MY DEAR COLLINS,—Mark has got something in his foot—which is not Gout, of course, though it has a family likeness to that disorder—which he thinks will disable him to-morrow. Under these circumstances, and as this inclement season of summer has set in with so much severity, I think it may be best to postpone our expedition.

The same.



Will you take a stroll on Hampstead Heath, and dine here on Sunday instead? And if yes, will you be here at two?

Ever faithfully.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Seventh June, 1854.*

Mr. Peter  
Cunning-  
ham.

MY DEAR CUNNINGHAM,—I cannot become one of the committee for Wilson's statue, after entertaining so strong an opinion against the expediency of such a memorial in poor dear Talfourd's case. But I will subscribe my three guineas, and will pay that sum to the account at Coutts' when I go there next week, before leaving town.

*The Goldsmiths* admirably done throughout. It is a book I have long desired to see done, and never expected to see half so well done. Many thanks to you for it.

Ever faithfully yours.

VILLA DU CAMP DE DROITE,  
*Thursday, Twenty-second June, 1854.*

Mr. W. H.  
Wills.

MY DEAR WILLS,—I have nothing to say, but having heard from you this morning, think I may as well report all well.

We have a most charming place here. It beats the former residence all to nothing. We have a beautiful garden, with all its fruits and flowers, and a field of our own, and a road of our own away to the Column, and everything that is airy and fresh. The great Beaucourt hovers about us like a guardian genius, and I imagine that no English person in a carriage could by any possibility find the place.

Of the wonderful inventions and contrivances with which a certain inimitable creature has made the most of it, I will say nothing, until you have an opportunity of inspecting the same. At present I will only observe that I have written exactly seventy-two words of *Hard Times*, since I have been here.

The children arrived on Tuesday night, by London boat, in every stage and aspect of sea-sickness.

The camp is about a mile off, and huts are now building for (they say) sixty thousand soldiers. I don't imagine it to be near enough to bother us.

If the weather ever should be fine, it might do you good sometimes to come over with the proofs on a Saturday, when the tide serves well, before you and Mrs. W. make your annual visit. Recollect there is always a bed, and no sudden appearance will put us out. Ever faithfully.

VILLA DU CAMP DE DROITE, BOULOGNE,  
Wednesday Night, Twelfth July, 1854.

MY DEAR COLLINS,—Bobbing up, corkwise, from a sea of *Hard Times*, I beg to report this tenement—AMAZING !!! Range of view and air, most free and delightful; hill-side garden, delicious; field, stupendous; speculations in haycocks already effected by the undersigned, with the view to the keeping up of a ‘home’ at rounders.

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

I hope to finish and get to town by next Wednesday night, the nineteenth; what do you say to coming back with me on the following Tuesday? The interval I propose to pass in a career of amiable dissipation and unbounded license in the metropolis. If you will come and breakfast with me about midnight—anywhere—any day, and go to bed no more until we fly to these pastoral retreats, I shall be delighted to have so vicious an associate.

Will you undertake to let Ward know that if he still wishes me to sit to him, he shall have me as long as he likes, at Tavistock House, on Monday, the 24th, from ten A. M.?

I have made it understood here that we shall want to be taken the greatest care of this summer, and to be fed on nourishing meats. Several new dishes have been rehearsed and have come out very well. I have met with what they call in the City ‘a parcel’ of the celebrated 1846 champagne. It is a very fine wine, and calculated to do us good when weak.

The camp is about a mile off. Voluptuous English authors reposing from their literary fatigues (on their laurels) are expected, when all other things fail, to lie on straw in the midst of it when the days are sunny, and stare at the blue sea until they fall asleep. (About one hundred and fifty soldiers have been at various times billeted on Beaucourt since



we have been here, and he has clinked glasses with them every one, and read a MS. book of his father's, on soldiers in general, to them all.)

I shall be glad to hear what you say to these various proposals. I write with the Emperor in the town, and a great expenditure of tricolour floating thereabouts, but no stir makes its way to this inaccessible retreat. It is like being up in a balloon. Lionising Englishmen and Germans start to call, and are found lying imbecile in the road half-way up. Ha! ha! ha! Ever faithfully.

PS.—The cobbler has been ill these many months, and unable to work; has had a carbuncle in his back, and has it cut three times a week. The little dog sits at the door so unhappy and anxious to help, that I every day expect to see him beginning a pair of top boots.

OFFICE OF 'HOUSEHOLD WORDS,'  
Saturday, Twenty-second July, 1854.

MISS HOGARTH. MY DEAR GEORGINA,—Neither you nor Catherine did justice to Collins' book.<sup>1</sup> I think it far away the cleverest novel I have ever seen written by a new hand. It is in some respects masterly. 'Valentine Blyth' is as original and as well done as anything can be. The scene where he shows his pictures is full of an admirable humour. Old Mat is admirably done. In short, I call it a very remarkable book, and I have been very much surprised by its great merit.

Tell Kate, with my love, that she will receive to-morrow, in a little parcel, the complete proofs of *Hard Times*.

They will not be corrected, but she will find them pretty plain. I am just now going to put them up for her. I saw Grisi the night before last in *Lucrezia Borgia*—finer than ever. Last night I was drinking gin-slings till daylight, with Buckstone of all people, who saw me looking at the Spanish dancers, and insisted on being convivial. I have

<sup>1</sup> *Hide and Seek.*

been in a blaze of dissipation altogether, and have succeeded (I think) in knocking the remembrance of my work out.

London is far hotter than Naples.

Ever affectionately.

BOULOGNE, *Wednesday, Second August, 1854.*

MY DEAR WILLS,—I will endeavour to come off my back (and the grass) to do an opening paper for the starting number of *North and South*. I can't positively answer for such a victory over the idleness into which I have delightfully sunk, as the achievement of this feat; but let us hope.

During a fête on Monday night the meteor flag of England (forgotten to be struck at sunset) was *stolen*!!!

Manage the proofs of *H. W.* so that I may not have to correct them on a Sunday. I am not going over to the Sabatarians, but like the haystack (particularly) on a Sunday morning.

I should like John to call on M. Henri, Townshend's servant, 21 Norfolk Street, Park Lane, and ask him if, when he comes here with his master, he can take charge of a trap bat and ball. If yea, then I should like John to proceed to Mr. Darke, Lords' Cricket Ground, and purchase said trap bat and ball of the best quality. Townshend is coming here on the fifteenth, probably will leave town a day or two before.

Pray be in a condition to drink a glass of 1846 champagne when *you* come.

I think I have no more to say at present. I cannot sufficiently admire my prodigious energy in coming out of a stupor to write this letter.

Ever faithfully.

VILLA DU CAMP DE DROITE, BOULOGNE,  
*Thursday, Seventeenth August, 1854.*

MY DEAR MRS. GASKELL,—I sent your MS. off to Wills yesterday, with instructions to forward it to you without delay. I hope you will have received it before this notification comes to hand.

The usual festivity of this place at present—which is the



blessing of soldiers by the ten thousand—has just now been varied by the baptizing of some new bells, lately hung up (to my sorrow and lunacy) in a neighbouring church. An English lady was godmother; and there was a procession afterwards, wherein an English gentleman carried ‘the relics’ in a highly suspicious box, like a barrel organ; and innumerable English ladies in white gowns and bridal wreaths walked two and two, as if they had all gone to school again.

At a review, on the same day, I was particularly struck by the commencement of the proceedings, and its singular contrast to the usual military operations in Hyde Park. Nothing would induce the general commanding-in-chief to begin, until chairs were brought for all the lady-spectators. And a detachment of about a hundred men deployed into all manner of farmhouses to find the chairs. Nobody seemed to lose any dignity by the transaction either.

Faithfully yours always.

VILLA DU CAMP DE DROITE, BOULOGNE,  
*Saturday, Nineteenth August, 1854.*

Rev.  
William  
Harness. MY DEAR HARNESS,—Yes. The book came from me. I could not put a memorandum to that effect on the title-page, in consequence of my being here.

I am heartily glad you like it. I know the piece you mention, but am far from being convinced by it. A great misgiving is upon me, that in many things (this thing among the rest) too many are martyrs to *our* complacency and satisfaction, and that we must give up something thereof for their poor sakes.

My kindest regards to your sister, and my love (if I may send it) to another of your relations.

Always, very faithfully yours.

VILLA DU CAMP DE DROITE, BOULOGNE,  
*Wednesday, Sixth September, 1854.*

Mr. Henry  
Austin. Any Saturday on which the tide serves your purpose (next Saturday excepted) will suit me for the flying visit you hint at; and we shall be delighted to see

you. If you could come here in dry weather you would find it as pretty, airy, and pleasant a situation as you ever saw. We illuminated the whole front of the house last night<sup>1</sup>—eighteen windows—and an immense palace of light was seen sparkling on this hill-top for miles and miles away. I rushed to a distance to look at it, and never saw anything of the same kind half so pretty.

The town looks like one immense flag, it is so decked out with streamers; and as the royal yacht approached yesterday—the whole range of the cliff tops lined with troops, and the artillery matches in hand, all ready to fire the great guns the moment she made the harbour; the sailors standing up in the prow of the yacht, the Prince in a blazing uniform, left alone on the deck for everybody to see—a stupendous silence, and then such an infernal blazing and banging as never was heard. It was almost as fine a sight as one could see under a deep-blue sky. In our own proper illumination I laid on all the servants, all the children now at home, all the visitors (it is the annual *Household Words* time), one to every window, with everything ready to light up on the ringing of a big dinner-bell by your humble correspondent. St. Peter's on Easter Monday was the result.

Ever affectionately.

BOULOGNE, *Tuesday, Twenty-sixth September, 1854.*

MY DEAR COLLINS,—First, I have to report that I received your letter with much pleasure.

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

Secondly, that the weather has entirely changed. It is so cool that we have not only a fire in the drawing-room regularly, but another to dine by. The delicious freshness of the air is charming, and it is generally bright and windy besides.

Thirdly, that V——'s intellectual faculties appear to have developed suddenly. He has taken to borrowing money; from which I infer (as he had no intention whatever of repaying) that his mental powers are of a high order. Having got a franc from me, he fell upon Mrs. Dickens for five sous.

<sup>1</sup> On the occasion of the Prince Consort's visit to the came at Boulogne.



She declining to enter into the transaction, he beleagured that feeble little couple, Harry and Sydney, into paying two sous each for 'tickets' to behold the ravishing spectacle of an utterly-non-existent-and-therefore-impossible-to-be-produced toy theatre. He eats stony apples, and harbours designs upon his fellow-creatures until he has become light-headed. From the couch rendered uneasy by this disorder he has arisen with an excessively protuberant forehead, a dull slow eye, a complexion of a leaden hue, and a croaky voice. He has become a horror to me, and I resort to the most cowardly expedients to avoid meeting him. He, on the other hand, wanting another franc, dodges me round those trees at the corner, and at the back door; and I have a presentiment upon me that I shall fall a sacrifice to his cupidity at last.

On the Sunday night after you left, or rather on the Monday morning at half-past one, Mary was taken *very ill*. English cholera. She was sinking so fast, and the sickness was so exceedingly alarming, that it evidently would not do to wait for Elliotson.<sup>1</sup> I caused everything to be done that we had naturally often thought of, in a lonely house so full of children, and fell back upon the old remedy; though the difficulty of giving even it was rendered very great by the frightful sickness. Thank God, she recovered so favourably that by breakfast time she was fast asleep. She slept twenty-four hours, and has never had the least uneasiness since. I heard—of course afterwards—that she had had an attack of sickness two nights before. I think that long ride and those late dinners had been too much for her. Without them I am inclined to doubt whether she would have been ill.

Last Sunday as ever was, the theatre took fire at half-past eleven in the forenoon. Being close by the English Church, it showered hot sparks into that temple through the open windows. Whereupon the congregation shrieked and rose and tumbled out into the street; —— benignly observing to the only ancient female who would listen to him, 'I fear we

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Elliotson happened, most fortunately, to be staying at Boulogne at this time.

must part'; and afterwards being beheld in the street—in his robes and with a kind of sacred wildness on him—handing ladies over the kennel into shops and other structures, where they had no business whatever, or the least desire to go. I got to the back of the theatre, where I could see in through some great doors that had been forced open, and whence the spectacle of the whole interior, burning like a red-hot cavern, was really very fine, even in the daylight. Meantime the soldiers were at work, 'saving' the scenery by pitching it into the next street; and the poor little properties (one spinning-wheel, a feeble imitation of a water-wheel, and a basketful of the dismalest artificial flowers very conspicuous) were being passed from hand to hand with the greatest excitement, as if they were rescued children or lovely women. In four or five hours the whole place was burnt down, except the outer walls. Never in my days did I behold such feeble endeavours in the way of extinguishment. On an average I should say it took ten minutes to throw half a gallon of water on the great roaring heap; and every time it was insulted in this way it gave a ferocious burst, and everybody ran off. Beaucourt has been going about for two days in a clean collar; which phenomenon evidently means something, but I don't know what. Elliotson reports that the great conjurer lives at his hotel, has extra wine every day, and fares expensively. Is he the devil?

I have heard from the Kernel.<sup>1</sup> Wa'al, sir, sayin' as he minded to locate himself with us for a week. I expected to have heard from him again this morning, but have not.

The Plornish-Maroon desires his duty. He had a fall yesterday, through overbalancing himself in kicking his nurse.

Ever faithfully.

BOULOGNE, *Friday, Thirteenth October, 1854.*

MY DEAR STONE,—Having some little matters that rather press on my attention to see to in town, I have made up my mind to relinquish the walking project, and come straight home (by way of Folkestone) on Tuesday. I shall be due in town at midnight, and

Mr. Frank  
Stone,  
A.R.A.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Egg.



shall hope to see you next day, with the top of your coat-collar mended.

Everything that happens here we suppose to be an announcement of the taking of Sebastopol. When a church-clock strikes, we think it is the joy-bell, and fly out of the house in a burst of nationality—to sneak in again. If they practise firing at the camp, we are sure it is the artillery celebrating the fall of the Russian, and we become enthusiastic in a moment. I live in constant readiness to illuminate the whole house. Whatever anybody says I believe; everybody says, every day, that Sebastopol is in flames. Sometimes the Commander-in-Chief has blown himself up, with seventy-five thousand men. Sometimes he has ‘cut’ his way through Lord Raglan, and has fallen back on the advancing body of the Russians, one hundred and forty-two thousand strong, whom he is going to ‘bring up’ (I don’t know where from, or how, or when, or why) for the destruction of the Allies. All these things, in the words of the catechism, ‘I steadfastly believe,’ until I become a mere driveller, a moonstruck, babbling, staring, credulous, imbecile, greedy, gaping, wooden-headed, addle-brained, wool-gathering, dreary, vacant, obstinate civilian.

Ever, my dear fellow-countryman, affectionately.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Twenty-sixth October, 1854.*

Mr. John  
Saunders.

DEAR SIR,—I have had much gratification and pleasure in the receipt of your obliging communication. Allow me to thank you for it, in the first place, with great cordiality.

Although I cannot say that I came without any prepossessions to the perusal of your play (for I had favourable inclinations towards it before I began), I *can* say that I read it with the closest attention, and that it inspired me with a strong interest, and a genuine and high admiration. The parts that involve some of the greatest difficulties of your task appear to me those in which you shine most. I would particularly instance the end of Julia as a very striking example of this. The delicacy and beauty of her redemption from her weak

rash lover, are very far indeed beyond the range of any ordinary dramatist, and display the true poetical strength.

As your hopes now centre in Mr. Phelps, and in seeing the child of your fancy on his stage, I will venture to point out to you not only what I take to be very dangerous portions of *Love's Martyrdom* as it stands, *for presentation on the stage*, but portions which I believe Mr. Phelps will speedily regard in that light when he sees it before him in the persons of live men and women on the wooden boards. Knowing him, I think he will be then as violently discouraged as he is now generously exalted; and it may be useful to you to be prepared for the consideration of those passages.

I do not regard it as a great stumbling-block that the play of modern times best known to an audience proceeds upon the main idea of this, namely, that there was a hunchback who, because of his deformity, mistrusted himself. But it is certainly a grain in the balance when the balance is going the wrong way, and therefore it should be most carefully trimmed. The incident of the ring is an insignificant one to look at over a row of gaslights, is difficult to convey to an audience, and the least thing will make it ludicrous. If it be so well done by Mr. Phelps himself as to be otherwise than ludicrous, it will be disagreeable. If it be either, it will be perilous, and doubly so, because you revert to it. The quarrel scene between the two brothers in the third act is now so long that the justification of blind passion and impetuosity—which can alone bear out Franklyn, before the bodily eyes of a great concourse of spectators, in plunging at the life of his own brother—is lost. That the two should be parted, and that Franklyn should again drive at him, and strike him, and then wound him, is a state of things to set the sympathy of an audience in the wrong direction, and turn it from the man you make happy to the man you leave unhappy. I would on no account allow the artist to appear, attended by that picture more than once. All the most sudden inconstancy of Clarence I would soften down. Margaret must act much better than any actress I have ever seen, if all her lines fall in pleasant places; therefore, I think she needs compression too.

All this applies solely to the theatre. If you ever revise



the sheets for readers, will you note in the margin the broken laughter and the appeals to the Deity? If, on summing them up, you find you want them all, I would leave them as they stand by all means. If not, I would blot accordingly.

It is only in the hope of being slightly useful to you by anticipating what I believe Mr. Phelps will discover—or what, if ever he should pass it, I have a strong conviction the audience will find out—that I have ventured on these few hints. Your concurrence with them generally, on reconsideration, or your preference for the poem as it stands, can not in the least affect my interest in your success. On the other hand, I have a perfect confidence in your not taking my misgivings ill; they arise out of my sincere desire for the triumph of your work.

With renewed thanks for the pleasure you have afforded me, I am, dear Sir,  
Faithfully yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *First November, 1854.*  
(And a constitutionally foggy day.)

Mr. W. C.      MY DEAREST MACREADY,—I thought it better not  
Macready.      to encumber the address to working men with details. Firstly, because they would detract from whatever fiery effect the words may have in them; secondly, because writing and petitioning and pressing a subject upon members and candidates are now so clearly understood; and thirdly, because the paper was meant as an opening to a persistent pressure of the whole question on the public, which would yield other opportunities of touching on such points.

In the number *for next week*—not this—is one of those following-up articles called ‘A Home Question.’ It is not written by me, but is generally of my suggesting, and is exceedingly well done by a thorough and experienced hand. I think you will find in it, generally, what you want. I have told the printers to send you a proof by post as soon as it is corrected—that is to say, as soon as some insertions I made in it last night are in type and in their places.

My dear old Parr, I don’t believe a word you write about *King John*! That is to say, I don’t believe you take into

account the enormous difference between the energy summonable-up in your study at Sherborne and the energy that will fire up in you (without so much as saying 'With your leave' or 'By your leave') in the Town Hall at Birmingham. I know you, you ancient codger, I know you! Therefore I will trouble you to be so good as to do an act of honesty after you have been to Birmingham, and to write to me, 'Ingenuous boy, you were correct. I find I could have read 'em *King John* with the greatest ease.'

In that vast hall in the busy town of Sherborne, in which our illustrious English novelist is expected to read next month—though he is strongly of opinion that he is deficient in power, and too old—I wonder what accommodation there is for reading! because our illustrious countryman likes to stand at a desk breast-high, with plenty of room about him, a sloping top, and a ledge to keep his book from tumbling off. If such a thing should not be there, however, on his arrival, I suppose even a Sherborne carpenter could knock it up out of a deal board. *Is there a deal board in Sherborne though?* I should like to hear Katey's <sup>1</sup> opinion on that point.

In this week's *Household Words* there is an exact portrait of our Boulogne landlord, which I hope you will like. I think of opening the next long book I write with a man of juvenile figure and strong face, who is always persuading himself that he is infirm. What do you think of the idea? I should like to have your opinion about it. I would make him an impetuous passionate sort of fellow, devilish grim upon occasion, and of an iron purpose. Droll, I fancy?

— is getting a little too fat, but appears to be troubled by the great responsibility of directing the whole war. He doesn't seem to be quite clear that he has got the ships into the exact order he intended, on the sea point of attack at Sebastopol. We went to the play last Saturday night with Stanfield, whose 'high lights' (as Maclise calls those knobs of brightness on the top of his cheeks) were more radiant than ever. We talked of you, and I told Stanny how they are imitating his *Acis and Galatea* sea in *Pericles*, at Phelps'. He didn't half like it; but I added, in nautical language, that it

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Macready's daughter.



was merely a piratical effort achieved by a handful of porpoise-faced swabs, and that brought him up with a round turn, as we say at sea.

We are looking forward to the twentieth of next month with great pleasure.—Ever, my dearest Macready,

Most affectionately yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Wednesday, First November, 1854.*

The Hon.  
Mrs.  
Watson.

MY DEAR MRS. WATSON,—The ‘Walk’ is not my writing. It is very well done by a close imitator. Why I found myself so ‘used up’ after *Hard Times* I scarcely know, perhaps because I intended to do nothing in that way for a year, when the idea laid hold of me by the throat in a very violent manner, and because the compression and close condensation necessary for that disjointed form of publication gave me perpetual trouble. But I really was tired, which is a result so very incomprehensible that I can’t forget it. I have passed an idle autumn in a beautiful situation, and am dreadfully brown and big.

If you carry out that bright Croydon idea, rely on our glad co-operation, only let me know all about it a few days beforehand; and if you feel equal to the contemplation of the moustache (which has been cut lately) it will give us the heartiest pleasure to come and meet you. This in spite of the terrific duffery of the Crystal Palace. It is a very remarkable thing in itself; but to have so very large a building continually crammed down one’s throat, and to find it a new page in *The Whole Duty of Man* to go there, is a little more than even I (and you know how amiable I am) can endure.

You always like to know what I am going to do, so I beg to announce that on the nineteenth of December I am going to read the *Carol* at Reading, where I undertook the presidency of the Literary Institution on the death of poor dear Talfourd. Then I am going on to Sherborne, in Dorsetshire, to do the like for another institution, which is one of the few remaining pleasures of Macready’s life. Then I am coming home for Christmas Day. Then I believe I must go to Bradford, in Yorkshire, to read once more to a little fireside party of four thousand. Then I am coming home again to get up

a new little version of *The Children in the Wood* (yet to be written, by the bye), for the children to act on Charley's birthday.

I am full of mixed feeling about the war—admiration of our valiant men, burning desires to cut the Emperor of Russia's throat, and something like despair to see how the old cannon-smoke and blood-mists obscure the wrongs and sufferings of the people at home. When I consider the Patriotic Fund on the one hand, and on the other the poverty and wretchedness engendered by cholera, of which in London alone, an infinitely larger number of English people than are likely to be slain in the whole Russian war have miserably and needlessly died—I feel as if the world had been pushed back five hundred years. If you are reading new books just now I think you will be interested with a controversy between Whewell and Brewster, on the question of the shining orbs about us being inhabited or no. Whewell's book is called, *On the Plurality of Worlds*; Brewster's, *More Worlds than One*. I shouldn't wonder if you know all about them. They bring together a vast number of points of great interest in natural philosophy, and some very curious reasoning on both sides, and leave the matter pretty much where it was.

We had a fine absurdity in connection with our luggage, when we left Boulogne. The barometer had within a few hours fallen about a foot, in honour of the occasion, and it was a tremendous night, blowing a gale of wind and raining a little deluge. The luggage (pretty heavy as you may suppose), in a cart drawn by two horses, stuck fast in a rut in our field, and couldn't be moved. Our man, made a lunatic by the extremity of the occasion, ran down to the town to get two more horses to help it out, when he returned with those horses and carter B, the most beaming of men; carter A, who had been soaking all the time by the disabled vehicle, descried in carter B the acknowledged enemy of his existence, took his own two horses out, and walked off with them! After which, the whole set-out remained in the field all night, and we came to town, thirteen individuals, with one comb and a pocket-handkerchief. I was upside-down during the greater part of the passage.



Dr. Rae's account of Franklin's unfortunate party is deeply interesting; but I think hasty in its acceptance of the details, particularly in the statement that they had eaten the dead bodies of their companions, which I don't believe. Franklin, on a former occasion, was almost starved to death, had gone through all the pains of that sad end, and lain down to die, and no such thought had presented itself to any of them. In famous cases of shipwreck, it is very rare indeed that any person of any humanising education or refinement resorts to this dreadful means of prolonging life. In open boats, the coarsest and commonest men of the shipwrecked party have done such things; but I don't remember more than one instance in which an officer had overcome the loathing that the idea had inspired. Dr. Rae talks about their *cooking* these remains too. I should like to know where the fuel came from.—Ever, my dear Mrs. Watson,

Affectionately yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Friday Night, Third November, 1854.*

Mr.  
Clarkson  
Stanfield,  
R.A.

MY DEAR STANNY,—This is not to remind you that we meet at the Athenæum next Monday at five, because none but a mouldy swab as never broke biscuit or lay out on the for'sel-yardarm in a gale of wind ever forgot an appointment with a messmate.

But what I want you to think of at your leisure is this: when our dear old Macready was in town last, I saw it would give him so much interest and pleasure if I promised to go down and read my *Christmas Carol* to the little Sherborne Institution, which is now one of the few active objects he has in the life about him, that I came out with that promise in a bold—I may say a swaggering way. Consequently, on Wednesday, the twentieth of December, I am going down to see him, with Kate and Georgina, returning to town in good time for Christmas, on Saturday, the twenty-third. Do you think you could manage to go and return with us? I really believe there is scarcely anything in the world that would give him such extraordinary pleasure as such a visit; and if you would empower me to send him an intimation that he may ex-

pect it, he will have a daily joy in looking forward to the time (I am seriously sure) which we—whose light has not gone out, and who are among our old dear pursuits and associations—can scarcely estimate.

I don't like to broach the idea in a careless way, and so I propose it thus, and ask you to think of it.

Ever most affectionately yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Sunday, Seventeenth December, 1854.*

MY DEAR MISS PROCTER,—You have given me <sup>Miss</sup> a new sensation. I did suppose that nothing in <sup>Procter.</sup> this singular world could surprise me, but you have done it.

You will believe my congratulations on the delicacy and talent of your writing to be sincere. From the first, I have always had an especial interest in that Miss Berwick, and have over and over again questioned Wills about her. I suppose he has gone on gradually building up an imaginary structure of life and adventure for her, but he has given me the strangest information! Only yesterday week, when we were 'making up' 'The Poor Travellers,' as I sat meditatively poking the office fire, I said to him, 'Wills, have you got that Miss Berwick's proof back, of the little sailor's song?' 'No,' he said. 'Well, but why not?' I asked him. 'Why, you know,' he answered, 'as I have often told you before, she don't live at the place to which her letters are addressed, and so there's always difficulty and delay in communicating with her.' 'Do you know what age she is?' I said. Here he looked unfathomably profound, and returned, 'Rather advanced in life.' 'You said she was a governess, didn't you?' said I; to which he replied in the most emphatic and positive manner, 'A governess.'

He then came and stood in the corner of the hearth, with his back to the fire, and delivered himself like an oracle concerning you. He told me that early in life (conveying to me the impression of about a quarter of a century ago) you had had your feelings desperately wounded by some cause, real or imaginary—'It does not matter which,' said I, with the greatest sagacity—and that you had then taken to writing verses. That you were of an unhappy temperament, but keenly sensitive to encouragement. That you wrote after the



educational duties of the day were discharged. That you sometimes thought of never writing any more. That you had been away for some time 'with your pupils.' That your letters were of a mild and melancholy character, and that you did not seem to care as much as might be expected about money. All this time I sat poking the fire, with a wisdom upon me absolutely crushing; and finally I begged him to assure the lady that she might trust me with her real address, and that it would be better to have it now, as I hoped our further communications, etc, etc. etc. You must have felt enormously wicked last Tuesday, when I, such a babe in the wood, was unconsciously prattling to you. But you have given me so much pleasure, and have made me shed so many tears, that I can only think of you now in association with the sentiment and grace of your verses.

So pray accept the blessing and forgiveness of Richard Watts, though I am afraid you come under both his conditions of exclusion.<sup>1</sup> Very faithfully yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Sunday, Seventeenth December, 1854.*

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

MY DEAR COLLINS,—Many thanks for your note. As I rode home in the hansom, that Gravesend night, one or two doubts arose in my mind respecting the Cowell facts; and before breakfast on the following morning I wrote to Mark, begging him to say nothing to Jerrold from me until I should have satisfied my mind. I am so sorry at heart for the working-people when they get into trouble, and have their wretched arena chalked out for them with such extraordinary complacency by small political economists, that I have a natural impulse upon me, almost always, to come to the rescue—even of people I detest, if I believe them to have been true to these poor men.

I am away to Reading to read the *Carol*, and to Sherborne, and, after Christmas Day, to Bradford, in Yorkshire. The thirtieth will conclude my public appearances for the present season, and then I hope we shall have some Christmas diver-

<sup>1</sup> The inscription on the house in Rochester known at 'Watts Charity' is to the effect that it furnishes a night's lodging for six poor travellers—'not being ROGUES or PROCTORS.'

sions here. I have got the children's play into shape, so far as the Text goes (it is an adaptation of *Fortunio*), but it has not been 'on the stage' yet. Mark is going to do the Dragon—with a practicable head and tail. Ever yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Christmas Eve*, 1854.

MY DEAR COLLINS,—Here is a Part in *Fortunio*—dozen words—but great Pantomime opportunities—which requires a first-rate old stager to devour Property Loaves. Will you join the joke and do it? Gobbler, one of the seven gifted servants, is the Being 'to let.' There is an eligible opportunity of making up dreadfully greedy.

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

I am going to read the piece to the children next Tuesday, at half-past two. We shall rehearse it at the same hour every day in the following week—dress rehearsal on Saturday night, the 6th; night of performance, Monday, the 8th.

I am just come back from Reading and Sherborne, and go to Bradford on Wednesday morning, returning next day.

If you should chance to be disengaged to-day, here we are—Pork, with sage and inions, at half-past five.

Ever faithfully.

1855

#### NARRATIVE

IN the beginning of this year, Charles Dickens gave public readings in Reading, Sherborne, and Bradford in Yorkshire, to which reference is made in the first following letters. Besides this, he was fully occupied in getting up a play for his children, which was acted on the Sixth of January. Mr. Planché's fairy extravaganza of *Fortunio and his Seven Gifted Servants* was the play selected, the parts being filled by all his own children and some of their young friends, and Charles Dickens, Mr. Mark Lemon, and Mr. Wilkie Collins playing with them, the only grown-up members of the company. In February, Charles Dickens made a short trip to Paris with Mr. Wilkie Collins, with an intention of going on



to Bordeaux, which was abandoned on account of bad weather. Out of the success of the children's play at Tavistock House rose a scheme for a serious play at the same place. Mr. Collins undertaking to write a melodrama for the purpose, and Mr. Stanfield to paint scenery and drop-scene, Charles Dickens turned one of the rooms of the house into a very perfect little theatre, and in June *The Lighthouse* was acted for three nights, with *Mr. Nightingale's Diary* and *Animal Magnetism* as farces; the actors being himself and several members of the original amateur company,—the actresses, his two daughters and his sister-in-law. Mr. Stanfield, after entering most heartily into the enterprise, and giving constant time and attention to the painting of his beautiful scenes, was unfortunately ill and unable to attend the first performance. We give a letter to him, reporting its great success.

In the summer Charles Dickens made a speech at a great meeting at Drury Lane Theatre on the subject of 'Administrative Reform,' of which he wrote to Mr. Macready. On this subject of 'Administrative Reform,' too, we give two letters to Mr. Layard, who also spoke at the Drury Lane meeting.

Charles Dickens had made a promise to give another reading at Birmingham for the funds of the institute which still needed help; and in a letter to Mr. Arthur Ryland, asking him to fix a time for it, he gives the first idea of a selection from *David Copperfield*, which was afterwards one of the most popular of his readings.

He was at all times fond of making excursions for a day—or two or three days—to Rochester and its neighbourhood; and after one of these, this year, he wrote to Mr. Wills that he had seen a 'small freehold' to be sold, *opposite* the house on which he had fixed his childish affections (and which he calls in *this* letter the 'Hermitage,' its real name being 'Gad's Hill Place'). The latter house was not, at that time, to be had, and he made some approach to negotiations as to the other 'little freehold,' which, however, did not come to anything. Soon after, Mr. Wills, by an accident, discovered that Gad's Hill Place, the property of Miss Lynn, the well-known

authoress, and a constant contributor to *Household Words*, was itself for sale; and a negotiation for its purchase commenced, which was not, however, completed until the following spring.

Later in the year the performance of *The Lighthouse* was repeated, for a charitable purpose, at the Campden House Theatre.

This autumn was passed at Folkestone. Charles Dickens had decided upon spending the following winter in Paris, and the family proceeded there from Folkestone in October, making a halt at Boulogne; from whence his sister-in-law preceded the party to Paris, to secure lodgings, with the help of Lady Olliffe.<sup>1</sup> He followed, to make his choice of the apartments that had been found, and he wrote to his wife and to Mr. Wills, giving a description of the Paris house. Here he began *Little Dorrit*. In a letter to Mrs. Watson, from Folkestone, he gives her the name which he had first proposed for this story—'Nobody's Fault.'

Mr. and Mrs. Hogarth occupied Tavistock House during the absence of Charles Dickens from England, and his eldest son, being now engaged in business, remained with them, coming to Paris only for Christmas. Three of his boys were at school at Boulogne at this time, and one, Walter Landor, at Wimbledon, studying for an Indian army appointment.

We are sorry to have only two short notes addressed to the late Mr. W. M. Thackeray. The first comes in this year, the second in the year 1858. We give them both, as we are glad to have the two names associated together in this work.

Mrs. Winter, to whom are addressed two letters in this year, was a very dear friend and companion of Charles Dickens in his youth.

Miss Emily Jolly was a contributor to *Household Words*, and is also the authoress of *Mr. Arle*, and many other clever novels.

Captain Morgan was a captain in the American merchant service. He was an intimate friend of Mr. Leslie, R.A., by whom he was made known to Charles Dickens. It may inter-

<sup>1</sup> Wife of Sir Joseph Olliffe, then physician to the British Embassy.



est our readers to know that the character of Captain Jorgan, in the Christmas Number for 1860, was suggested by this pleasant sailor for whom Charles Dickens had a hearty liking.

### PROLOGUE TO 'THE LIGHTHOUSE'

(Spoken by CHARLES DICKENS)

*(Slow music all the time, unseen speaker, curtain down.)*

A story of these rocks where doomed ships come  
To cast their wrecks upon the steps of home,  
Where solitary men, the long year through—  
The wind their music and the brine their view—  
Warn mariners to shun the beacon-light;  
A story of those rocks is here to-night.  
Eddystone Lighthouse

*(Exterior view discovered.)*

In its ancient form;  
Ere he who built it wish'd<sup>1</sup> for the great storm  
That shiver'd it to nothing; once again  
Behold outgleaming on the angry main!  
Within it are three men; to these repair  
In our frail bark of Fancy, swift as air!  
They are but shadows, as the rower grim  
Took none but shadows in his boat with him.  
So be ye shades, and, for a little space,  
The real world a dream without a trace.  
Return is easy. It will have ye back  
Too soon to the old beaten dusty track;  
For but one hour forget it. Billows rise,  
Blow winds, fall rain, be black, ye midnight skies;  
And you who watch the light, arise! arise!

*(Exterior view rises and discovers the scene.)*

<sup>1</sup> Henry Winstanley, the builder of the first Eddystone Lighthouse in 1696, considered it so strong that he expressed a wish that he might be in it during the greatest storm that ever blew. He had his wish, and was in his Lighthouse when it was blown away in a terrific storm in 1703.

## THE SONG OF THE WRECK

## I

The wind blew high, the waters raved,  
A ship drove on the land,  
A hundred human creatures saved,  
Kneeled down upon the sand.  
Threescore were drowned, threescore were thrown  
Upon the black rocks wild,  
And thus among them, left alone,  
They found one helpless child.

## II

A seaman rough, to shipwreck bred,  
Stood out from all the rest,  
And gently laid the lonely head  
Upon his honest breast.  
And travelling o'er the desert wide,  
It was a solemn joy,  
To see them, ever side by side,  
The sailor and the boy.

## III

In famine, sickness, hunger, thirst,  
These two were still but one,  
Until the strong man drooped the first,  
And felt his labours done.  
Then to a trusty friend he spake,  
'Across the desert wide,  
O take the poor boy for my sake!  
And kissed the child and died.

## IV

Toiling along in weary plight,  
Through heavy jungle mire,  
These two came later every night  
To warm them at the fire.  
Until the captain said one day,



'O seaman good and kind,  
 To save thyself now come away,  
 And leave the boy behind!'

v

The child was slumb'ring near the blaze,  
 'O captain, let him rest  
 Until it sinks, when God's own ways  
 Shall teach us what is best!  
 They watched the whitened ashy heap,  
 They touched the child in vain;  
 They did not leave him there asleep,  
 He never woke again.

This song was sung to the music of 'Little Nell,' a ballad composed by the late Mr. George Linley, to the words of Miss Charlotte Young, and dedicated to Charles Dickens. He was very fond of it, and his eldest daughter had been in the habit of singing it to him constantly since she was quite a child.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Third January, 1855.*

M. De  
 Cerjat. MY DEAR CERJAT,—When your Christmas letter did not arrive according to custom, I felt as if a bit of Christmas had fallen out and there was no supplying the piece. However, it was soon supplied by yourself, and the bowl became round and sound again.

The Christmas number of *Household Words*, I suppose, will reach Lausanne about midsummer. The first ten pages or so—all under the head of 'The First Poor Traveller'—are written by me, and I hope you will find, in the story of the soldier which they contain, something that may move you a little. It moved me *not* a little in the writing, and I believe has touched a vast number of people. We have sold eighty thousand of it.

I am but newly come home from reading at Reading, and at Sherborne, in Dorsetshire, and at Bradford, in Yorkshire. Wonderful audiences! and the number at the last place three thousand seven hundred. And yet but for the noise of their laughing and cheering, they 'went' like one man.

The absorption of the English mind in the war is, to me, a melancholy thing. Every other subject of popular solicitude and sympathy goes down before it. I fear I clearly see that for years to come domestic reforms are shaken to the root; every miserable red-tapist flourishes war over the head of every protester against his humbug; and everything connected with it is pushed to such an unreasonable extent, that, however kind and necessary it may be in itself, it becomes ridiculous. For all this is an indubitable fact, I conceive, that Russia MUST BE stopped, and that the future peace of the world renders the war imperative upon us. The Duke of Newcastle lately addressed a private letter to the newspapers, entreating them to exercise a larger discretion in respect of the letters of 'Our Own Correspondents,' against which Lord Raglan protests as giving the Emperor of Russia information for nothing which would cost him (if indeed he could get it at all) fifty or a hundred thousand pounds a year. The communication has not been attended with much effect, so far as I can see. In the meantime I do suppose we have the wretchedest Ministry that ever was—in whom nobody not in office of some sort believes—yet whom there is nobody to displace. The strangest result, perhaps, of years of Reformed Parliaments that ever the general sagacity did *not* forsake.

Let me recommend you, as a brother-reader of high distinction, two comedies, both Goldsmith's—*She Stoops to Conquer*, and *The Good-natured Man*. Both are so admirable and so delightfully written that they read wonderfully. A friend of mine, Forster, who wrote *The Life of Goldsmith*, was very ill a year or so ago, and begged me to read to him one night as he lay in bed, 'something of Goldsmith's.' I fell upon *She Stoops to Conquer*, and we enjoyed it with that wonderful intensity, that I believe he began to get better in the first scene, and was all right again in the fifth act.

I am charmed by your account of Haldimand, to whom my love. Tell him Sydney Smith's daughter has privately printed a life of her father with selections from his letters, which has great merit, and often presents him exactly as he used to be. I have strongly urged her to publish it, and I think she will do so, about March.



My eldest boy has come home from Germany to learn a business life at Birmingham (I think), first of all. The whole nine are well and happy. Ditto, Mrs. Dickens. Ditto, Georgina. My two girls are full of interest in yours; and one of mine (as I think I told you when I was at the Elysée) is curiously like one of yours in the face. They are all agog now about a great fairy play, which is to come off here next Monday. The house is full of spangles, gas, Jew theatrical tailors, and pantomime carpenters. We all unite in kindest and best loves to dear Mrs. Cerjat and all the blooming daughters. And I am, with frequent thoughts of you and cordial affection, ever, my dear Cerjat,

Your faithful Friend.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Third January*, 1855.

Miss Mary  
Boyle.

MY DEAR MARY,—This is a word of heartfelt greeting, in exchange for yours, which came to me most pleasantly, and was received with a cordial welcome. If I had leisure to write a letter, I should write you, at this point, perhaps the very best letter that ever was read; but, being in the agonies of getting up a gorgeous fairy play for the children, on Charley's birthday (besides having the work of half a dozen to do as a regular thing), I leave the merits of the wonderful epistle to your lively fancy.

Enclosing a kiss, if you will have the kindness to return it when done with.

I have just been reading my *Christmas Carol* in Yorkshire. I should have lost my heart to the beautiful young landlady of my hotel (age twenty-nine, dress, black frock and jacket, exquisitely braided) if it had not been safe in your possession.

Many, many happy years to you! My regards to that obstinate old Wurzell and his dame, when you have them under lock and key again.<sup>1</sup>

Ever affectionately yours.

<sup>1</sup> Captain Cavendish Boyle was governor of the military prison at Weedon.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Twenty-seventh January, 1855.*

MY DEAR MRS. GASKELL,—Let me congratulate you on the conclusion of your story; not because it is the end of a task to which you had conceived a dislike (for I imagine you to have got the better of that delusion by this time), but because it is the vigorous and powerful accomplishment of an anxious labour. It seems to me that you have felt the ground thoroughly firm under your feet, and have strided on with a force and purpose that MUST now give you pleasure.

Mrs.  
Gaskell.

You will not, I hope, allow that non-lucid interval of dissatisfaction with yourself (and me?), which beset you for a minute or two once upon a time, to linger in the shape of any disagreeable association with *Household Words*. I shall still look forward to the large sides of paper, and shall soon feel disappointed if they don't begin to reappear.

I thought it best that Wills should write the business letter on the conclusion of the story, as that part of our communications had always previously rested with him. I trust you found it satisfactory? I refer to it, not as a matter of mere form, but because I sincerely wish everything between us to be beyond the possibility of misunderstanding or reservation.—Dear Mrs. Gaskell, Very faithfully yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Monday, Twenty-ninth January, 1855.*

MY DEAR MR. RYLAND,—I have been in the greatest difficulty—which I am not yet out of—to know what to read at Birmingham. I fear the idea of next month is now impracticable. Which of two other months do you think would be preferable for your Birmingham objects? Next May, or next December?

Mr. Arthur  
Ryland.

Having already read two Christmas books at Birmingham, I should like to get out of that restriction, and have a swim in the broader waters of one of my long books. I have been poring over *Copperfield* (which is my favourite), with the idea of getting a reading out of it, to be called by some such name as 'Young Housekeeping and Little Emily.' But there is still the huge difficulty that I constructed the whole with immense pains, and have so woven it up and blended it to-



gether, that I cannot yet so separate the parts as to tell the story of David's married life with Dora, and the story of Mr. Peggotty's search for his niece, within the time. This is my object. If I could possibly bring it to bear, it would make a very attractive reading, with a strong interest in it, and a certain completeness.

This is exactly the state of the case. I don't mind confiding to you, that I never can approach the book with perfect composure (it had such perfect possession of me when I wrote it), and that I no sooner begin to try to get it into this form, than I begin to read it all, and to feel that I cannot disturb it. I have not been unmindful of the agreement we made at parting, and I have sat staring at the backs of my books for an inspiration. This project is the only one that I have constantly reverted to, and yet I have made no progress in it!

Faithfully yours always.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, LONDON, *Saturday Evening, Third February, 1855.*

Monsieur  
Régnier.

MY DEAR RÉGNIER,—I am coming to Paris for a week, with my friend Collins—son of the English painter who painted our green lanes and our cottage children so beautifully. Do not tell this to Le Vieux. Unless I have the ill fortune to stumble against him in the street I shall not make my arrival known to him.

I purpose leaving here on Sunday, the eleventh, but I shall stay that night at Boulogne to see two of my little boys who are at school there. We shall come to Paris on Monday, the twelfth, arriving there in the evening.

Now, *mon cher*, do you think you can, without inconvenience, engage me for a week an apartment—cheerful, light, and wholesome—containing a comfortable *salon et deux chambres à coucher*. I do not care whether it is an hotel or not, but the reason why I do not write for an apartment to the Hôtel Brighton is, that there they expect one to dine at home (I mean in the apartment) generally; whereas, as we are coming to Paris expressly to be always looking about us, we want to dine wherever we like every day. Consequently, what we want to find is a good apartment, where we can have our breakfast but where we shall never dine.

Can you engage such accommodation for me? If you can, I shall feel very much obliged to you. If the apartment should happen to contain a little bed for a servant I might perhaps bring one, but I do not care about that at all. I want it to be pleasant and gay, and to throw myself *en garçon* on the festive *diableries de Paris*.

All the children send their loves to the two brave boys and the Normandy *bonnes*.

I shall hope for a short answer from you one day next week.—My dear Régnier, Always faithfully yours.

OFFICE OF 'HOUSEHOLD WORDS,' Friday, Ninth February, 1855.

MY DEAR WILLS,—I want to alter the arrangements for to-morrow, and put you to some inconvenience. Mr. W. H. Wills.

When I was at Gravesend t'other day, I saw, at Gad's Hill—just opposite to the Hermitage, where Miss Lynn used to live—a little freehold to be sold. The spot and the very house are literally 'a dream of my childhood,' and I should like to look at it before I go to Paris. With that purpose I must go to Strood by the North Kent, at a quarter-past ten to-morrow morning, and I want you, strongly booted, to go with me! (I know the particulars from the agent.)

Can you? Let me know. If you can, can you manage so that we can take the proofs with us? If you can't, will you bring them to Tavistock House at dinner time to-morrow, half-past five? Forster will dine with us, but no one else.

Ever faithfully.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Friday Evening, Ninth February, 1855.

MY DEAR MISS KING,—I wish to get over the disagreeable part of my letter in the beginning. Miss King.  
I have great doubts of the possibility of publishing your story in portions.

But I think it possesses *very great merit*. My doubts arise partly from the nature of the interest which I fear requires presentation as a whole, and partly on your manner of relating the tale. The people do not sufficiently work out their own purposes in dialogue and dramatic action. You are too



much their exponent; what you do for them, they ought to do for themselves. With reference to publication in detached portions (or, indeed, with a reference to the force of the story in any form), that long stoppage and going back to possess the reader with the antecedents of the clergyman's biography, are rather crippling. I may mention that I think the boy (the child of the second marriage) a little too 'slangy.' I know the kind of boyish slang which belongs to such a character in these times; but, considering his part in the story, I regard it as the author's function to elevate such a characteristic, and soften it into something more expressive of the ardour and flush of youth, and its romance. It seems to me, too, that the dialogues between the lady and the Italian maid are conventional but not natural. This observation I regard as particularly applying to the maid, and to the scene preceding the murder. Supposing the main objection surmountable, I would venture then to suggest to you the means of improvement in this respect.

The paper is so full of good touches of character, passion, and natural emotion, that I very much wish for a little time to reconsider it, and to try whether condensation here and there would enable us to get it say into four parts. I am not sanguine of this, for I observed the difficulties as I read it the night before last; but I am very unwilling, I assure you, to decline what has so much merit.

I am going to Paris on Sunday morning for ten days or so. I purpose being back again within a fortnight. If you will let me think of this matter in the meanwhile, I shall at least have done all I can to satisfy my own appreciation of your work.

But if, in the meantime, you should desire to have it back with any prospect of publishing it through other means, a letter—the shortest in the world—from you to Mr. Wills at the *Household Words* office will immediately produce it. I repeat with perfect sincerity that I am much impressed by its merits, and that if I had read it as the production of an entire stranger, I think it would have made exactly this effect upon me,—My dear Miss King,                      Very faithfully yours.

HÔTEL MEURICE, PARIS,  
*Friday, Sixteenth February, 1855.*

MY DEAR GEORGY,—I heard from home last night; but the posts are so delayed and put out by the snow, that they come in at all sorts of times except the right times, and utterly defy all calculation. Will you tell Catherine with my love, that I will write to her again to-morrow afternoon; I hope she may then receive my letter by Monday morning, and in it I purpose telling her when I may be expected home. The weather is so severe and the roads are so bad, that the journey to and from Bordeaux seems out of the question. We have made up our minds to abandon it for the present, and to return about Tuesday night or Wednesday. Collins continues in a queer state, but is perfectly cheerful under the stoppage of his wine and other afflictions.

We have a beautiful apartment, very elegantly furnished, very thickly carpeted, and as warm as any apartment in Paris *can* be in such weather. We are very well waited on and looked after. We breakfast at ten, read and write till two, and then I go out walking all over Paris, while the invalid sits by the fire or is deposited in a café. We dine at five, in a different restaurant every day, and at seven or so go to the theatre—sometimes to two theatres, sometimes to three. We get home about twelve, light the fire, and drink lemonade, to which *I* add rum. We go to bed between one and two. I live in peace, like an elderly gentleman, and regard myself as in a negative state of virtue and respectability.

The theatres are not particularly good, but I have seen Lemaître act in the most wonderful and astounding manner. I am afraid we must go to the Opéra Comique on Sunday. To-morrow we dine with Régnier, and to-day with the Olliffes.

*La Joie fait Peur*, at the Français, delighted me. Exquisitely played and beautifully imagined altogether. Last night we went to the Porte St. Martin to see a piece (English subject) called *Jane Osborne*, which the characters pronounce ‘Ja Nosbornne.’ The seducer was Lord Nottingham. The comic Englishwoman’s name (she kept lodgings and was a very bad character) was Missees Christmas. She had begun



to get into great difficulties with a gentleman of the name of Meestair Cornhill, when we were obliged to leave, at the end of the first act, by the intolerable stench of the place. The whole theatre must be standing over some vast cess-pool. It was so alarming that I instantly rushed into a café and had brandy.

My ear has gradually become so accustomed to French, that I understand the people at the theatres (for the first time) with perfect ease and satisfaction. I walked about with Régnier for an hour and a half yesterday, and received many compliments on my angelic manner of speaking the celestial language. There is a winter Franconi's now, high up on the Boulevards, just like the round theatre on the Champs Elysées, and as bright and beautiful. A clown from Astley's is all in high favour there at present. He talks slang English (being evidently an idiot), as if he felt a perfect confidence that everybody understands him. His name is Boswell, and the whole cirque rang last night with cries for Boz Zwilllll! Boz Zweellll! Boz Zwuallll! etc. etc. etc. etc.

I must begin to look out for the box of bon-bons for the noble and fascinating Plornish-Maroon. Give him my love and a thousand kisses.

The following stab to Anne—she forgot to pack me any shaving soap.—Ever, my dear Georgy,

Most affectionately yours.

HÔTEL MEURICE, PARIS, *Friday, Sixteenth February, 1855.*

Mr. W. H.  
Wills.

MY DEAR WILLS,—I received your letter yesterday evening. I am living like Gil Blas and doing nothing. I am very much obliged to you, indeed, for the trouble you have kindly taken about the little freehold. It is clear to me that its merits resolve themselves into the view and the spot. If I had more money these considerations might, with me, overtop all others. But, as it is, I consider the matter quite disposed of, finally settled in the negative, and to be thought no more about. I shall not go down and look at it, as I could add nothing to your report.

Paris is finer than ever, and I go wandering about it all day. I suppose, as an old farmer said of Scott, I am 'makin'

myself' ' all the time; but I seem to be rather a free-and-easy sort of superior vagabond.

I live in continual terror of P——, and am strongly fortified within doors, with a means of retreat into my bedroom always ready. Up to the present blessed moment, his staggering form has not appeared.

As to yesterday's post from England, I have not, at the present moment, the slightest idea where it may be. It is under the snow somewhere, I suppose; but nobody expects it, and *Galignani* reprints every morning leaders from the *Times* of about a fortnight or three weeks old.

Collins, who is not very well, sends his 'penitent regards,' and says he is enjoying himself as much as a man with the weight of a broken promise on his conscience can.—Ever, my dear Wills,

Faithfully yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Twenty-fourth February, 1855.*

MY DEAR MISS KING,—I have gone carefully over your story again, and quite agree with you that the episode of the clergyman could be told in a very few lines. Startling as I know it will appear to you, I am bound to say that I think the purpose of the whole tale would be immensely strengthened by great compression. I doubt if it could not be told more forcibly in half the space.

It is certainly too long for *Household Words*, and I fear my idea of it is too short for you. I am, if possible, more unwilling than I was at first to decline it; but the more I have considered it, the longer it has seemed to grow. Nor can I ask you to try to present it free from that objection, because I already perceive the difficulty, and pain, of such an effort.

To the best of my knowledge, you are wrong about the Lady at last, and to the best of my observation, you do not express what you explain yourself to mean in the case of the Italian attendant. I have met with such talk in the romances of Maturin's time—certainly never in Italian life.

These, however, are slight points easily to be compromised in an hour. The great obstacle I must leave wholly to



## 436 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

your own judgment, in looking over the tale again.—Believe me always,  
Very faithfully yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, LONDON, *Sunday, Twenty-fifth February, 1855.*

Sir Joseph  
Olliffe.

MY DEAR OLLIFFE,—As soon as I came home I communicated with —— on the subject we spoke of. The best report I can make is to send you his written account of the questions. How is it? The thaw here (which began yesterday morning) is of a very earnest description. Everything is weeping. All the buildings have severe colds in their heads, all the window-sills are in the first stage of measles, all the water-pipes are bursting, all the streets are great black heaps of mud.

Five hundred thousand pairs of pattens are now going to church, and the bells are making such an intolerable uproar that I can't hear myself think.

I don't know what is to be done to Lady Olliffe if she ever comes to London again without writing word of her arrival.—Believe me always,  
Very faithfully yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Twenty-sixth February, 1855.*

Mr. Arthur  
Ryland.

MY DEAR MR. RYLAND,—Charley came home, I assure you, perfectly delighted with his visit to you, and rapturous in his accounts of your great kindness to him.

It appears to me that the first question in reference to my reading (I have not advanced an inch in my *Copperfield* trials by the bye) is, whether you think you could devise any plan in connection with the room at Dee's, which would certainly bring my help in money up to five hundred pounds. That is what I want. If it could be done by a subscription for two nights, for instance, I would not be chary of my time and trouble. But if you cannot see your way clearly to that result in that connection, then I think it would be better to wait until we can have the Town Hall at Christmas. I have promised to read, about Christmas time, at Sheffield and at Peterboro'. I *could* add Birmingham to the list, then, if need were. But what I want is, to give the institution in all

five hundred pounds. That is my object, and nothing less will satisfy me.

Will you think it over, taking counsel with whomsoever you please, and let me know what conclusion you arrive at? Only think of me as subservient to the institution.—My dear Mr. Ryland,

Always very faithfully yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Twenty-eighth February*, 1855.

MY DEAR DAVID ROBERTS,—I hope to make it quite plain to you, in a few words, why I think it right to stay away from the Lord Mayor's dinner to the club. If I did not feel a kind of rectitude involved in my non-acceptance of his invitation, your note would immediately induce me to change my mind.

Mr. David  
Roberts,  
R.A.

Entertaining a strong opinion on the subject of the City Corporation as it stands, and the absurdity of its pretensions in an age perfectly different, in all conceivable respects, from that to which it properly belonged as a reality, I have expressed that opinion on more than one occasion, within a year or so, in *Household Words*. I do not think it consistent with my respect for myself, or for the art I profess, to blow hot and cold in the same breath; and to laugh at the institution in print, and accept the hospitality of its representative while the ink is staring us all in the face. There is a great deal too much of this among us, and it does not elevate the earnestness or delicacy of literature.

This is my sole consideration. Personally I have always met the present Lord Mayor on the most agreeable terms, and I think him an excellent one. As between you, and me, and him, I cannot have the slightest objection to your telling him the truth. On a more private occasion, when he was not keeping his state, I should be delighted to interchange any courtesy with that honourable and amiable gentleman, Mr. Moon.

Believe me always cordially yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Sunday, Fourth March*, 1855.

MY DEAR COLLINS,—I have to report another failure on the part of our friend 'Williams' last night. He so confounded an enlightened British

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins



audience at the Standard Theatre on the subject of *Antony and Cleopatra*, that I clearly saw them wondering, towards the end of the Fourth Act, when the play was going to begin.

A man much heavier than Mark (in the actual scale, I mean), and about twenty years older, played Cæsar. When he came on with a map of London—pretending it was a scroll and making believe to read it—and said, 'He calls me Boy'—a howl of derision arose from the audience which you probably heard in the dark, without knowing what occasioned it. All the smaller characters, having their speeches much upon their minds, came in and let them off without the slightest reference to cues. And Miss Glyn, in some entirely new conception of her art, 'read' her part like a Patter song—several lines on end with the rapidity of Charles Mathews, and then one very long word. It was very brightly and creditably got up, but (as I have said) 'Williams' did not carry the audience, and I don't think the Sixty Pounds a week will be got back by the Manager.

You will have the goodness to picture me to yourself—alone—in profound solitude—in an abyss of despair—ensconced in a small Managerial Private Box in the very centre of the House—frightfully sleepy (I had a dirty steak in the City first, and I think they must have put Laudanum into the Harvey's sauce), and played at, point-blank, by the entire strength of the company. The horrors in which I constantly woke up, and found myself detected, you will imagine. The gentle Glyn, on being called for, heaved her snowy bosom straight at me, and the box keeper informed me that the Manager who brought her on would 'have the honour of stepping round directly.' I sneaked away in the most craven and dastardly manner, and made an utterly false representation that I was coming back again.

If you will give me one glass of hot gin and water on Thursday or Friday evening, I will come up about eight o'clock with a cigar in my pocket and inspect the Hospital. I am afraid this relaxing weather will tell a little faintly on your medicine, but I hope you will soon begin to see land beyond the Hunterian Ocean.

I have been writing and planning and making notes over

an immense number of little bits of paper—and I never can write legibly under such circumstances.

Always cordially yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Monday, Nineteenth March, 1855.*

MY DEAR COLLINS,—I have read the two first portions of *Sister Rose* with the very greatest pleasure. An excellent story, charmingly written, and showing everywhere an amount of pains and study in respect to the art of doing such things that I see mighty seldom.

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

If I be right in supposing that the brother and sister are concealing the husband's mother, then will you look at the closing scene of the second part again, and consider whether you cannot make the indication of that circumstance a little more obscure—or, at all events, a little less emphatic: as by Rose's only asking her brother once for leave to tell her husband, or some slight alteration of that kind? The best way I know of strengthening the interest and hitting this point would be the introduction or mention, in the first instance, of *some one other person* who *might* (in the reader's divided thoughts) be the concealed person, and of whom the husband might have a latent dislike or jealousy—as a friend of the brother's. But this might involve too great a change.

If, on the other hand, it be not the mother who is visited, then it is clear that you have altogether succeeded as it stands, and have entirely misled me.

How are you getting on? Shall you be up to a day at Ashford to-morrow week? I shall be able to frank you down and up the Railway on the solemn occasion. Mark (whose face is at present enormous) is going, and Wills will tell us the story of the Bo'sen, whose artful chaff, in that sparkling dialogue, played the Devil with T. Cooke.

Talking of which feat, I wish you could have seen your servant last Wednesday beleaguer the Literary Fund. They got so bothered and bewildered that I expected to see them all fade away under the table; and the outsiders laughed so irreverently whenever I poked up the chairman that it was quite a facetious business. Virtually, I consider the thing done. You may believe that I am not about to let go, and



the effect has far and far exceeded my expectations already. Mark is full of the subject and will tell you all about it.

What is Mr. Pigott's address? I want to leave a card for him.  
Ever faithfully.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Friday Evening, Twenty-third March, 1855.*

Mr. W. M. Thackeray. MY DEAR THACKERAY,—I have read in the *Times* to-day an account of your last night's lecture, and cannot refrain from assuring you in all truth and earnestness that I am profoundly touched by your generous reference to me. I do not know how to tell you what a glow it spread over my heart. Out of its fulness I do entreat you to believe that I shall never forget your words of commendation. If you could wholly know at once how you have moved me, and how you have animated me, you would be happier I am very certain. Faithfully yours ever.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Saturday, Twenty-fourth March, 1855.*

Mr. W. Wilkie Collins. MY DEAR COLLINS,—I am charmed to hear of the great improvement, and really hope now that you are beginning to see land.

The train (an express one) leaves London Bridge Station on Tuesday at half-past eleven in the forenoon. Fire and comfort are ordered to be in readiness at the Inn at Ashford. We shall have to return at half-past two in the morning—getting to town before five—but the interval between the Reading and the Mails will be spent by what would be called in a popular musical entertainment 'the flick o' our ain fire-sides'—which reminds me to observe that I am dead sick of the Scottish tongue in all its moods and tenses.

You have guessed right! The best of it was that she [Mrs. Gaskell] wrote to Wills, saying she must particularly stipulate not to have her proofs touched, 'even by Mr. Dickens.' That immortal creature had gone over the proofs [*North and South*] with great pains—had of course taken out the stiflings—hard-plungings, lungeings, and other convulsions—and had also taken out her weakenings and dam-

agings of her own effects. 'Very well,' said the gifted Man, 'she shall have her own way. But after it's published show her this Proof, and ask her to consider whether her story would have been the better or the worse for it.'

When you see Millais, tell him that if he would like a quotation for his fireman picture there is a very suitable and appropriate one to be got from Gay's *Trivia*. . . .

Ever yours.

I dined with an old General yesterday, who went perfectly mad at dinner about the *Times*—exudations taking place from his mouth while he denied all its statements, that were partly foam, and partly turbot with white sauce. He persisted, likewise, in speaking of that Journal as 'Him.'

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Friday, Twenty-ninth March, 1855.*

MY DEAR FORSTER,—I have hope of Mr. Morley,<sup>1</sup> whom one cannot see without knowing to be Mr. John Forster. a straightforward, earnest man. I also think Higgins<sup>2</sup> will materially help them.<sup>3</sup> Generally, I quite agree with you that they hardly know what to be at; but it is an immensely difficult subject to start, and they must have every allowance. At any rate, it is not by leaving them alone and giving them no help, that they can be urged on to success. (Travers, too, I think, a man of the Anti-Corn-Law-League order.)

Higgins told me, after the meeting on Monday night, that on the previous evening he had been closeted with —, whose letter in that day's paper he had put right for the *Times*. He had never spoken to — before, he said, and found him a rather muddle-headed Scotchman as to his powers of conveying his ideas. He (Higgins) had gone over his documents judicially, and with the greatest attention; and not only was — wrong in every particular (except one very unimportant circumstance), but, in reading documents to the House, had stopped short in sentences where no stop

<sup>1</sup> Chairman of the 'Administrative Reform League' Meeting at Drury Lane Theatre.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Higgins, best known as a writer in the *Times*, under the name of 'Jacob Omnium.'

<sup>3</sup> The Members of the Administrative Reform League.



was, and by so doing had utterly perverted their meaning.

This is to come out, of course, when said —— gets the matter on. I thought the case so changed, before I knew this, by his letter and that of the other shipowners, that I told Morley, when I went down to the theatre, that I felt myself called upon to relieve him from the condition I had imposed.

For the rest, I am quite calmly confident that I only do justice to the strength of my opinions, and use the power which circumstances have given me, conscientiously and moderately, with a right object, and towards the prevention of nameless miseries. I should be now reproaching myself if I had not gone to the meeting, and, having been, I am very glad.

A good illustration of a Government office. T—— very kindly wrote to me to suggest that ‘Houses of Parliament’ illustration. After I had dined on Wednesday, and was going to jog slowly down to Drury Lane, it suddenly came into my head that perhaps his details were wrong. I had just time to turn to the *Annual Register*, and *not one of them was correct!*

This is, of course, in close confidence.

Ever affectionately.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Tuesday Evening, Third April, 1855.*

Mr. Austen  
Henry  
Layard.

DEAR LAYARD,—Since I had the pleasure of seeing you again at Miss Coutts’ (really a greater pleasure to me than I could easily tell you), I have thought a good deal of the duty we all owe you of helping you as much as we can. Being on very intimate terms with Lemon, the editor of *Punch* (a most affectionate and true-hearted fellow), I mentioned to him in confidence what I had at heart. You will find yourself the subject of their next large cut, and of some lines in an earnest spirit. He again suggested the point to Mr. Shirley Brookes, one of their regular corps, who will do what is right in the *Illustrated London News* and the *Weekly Chronicle*, papers that go into the hands of large numbers of people. I have also communicated with Jerrold, whom I trust, and have begged

him not to be diverted from the straight path of help to the most useful man in England on all possible occasions. Forster I will speak to carefully, and I have no doubt it will quicken him a little; not that we have anything to complain of in his direction. If you ever see any new loophole, cranny, or needle's-eye, through which I can present your case to *Household Words*, I most earnestly entreat you, as your staunch friend and admirer—you *can* have no truer—to indicate it to me at any time or season, and to count upon my being Damascus steel to the core.

All this is nothing; because all these men, and thousands of others, dote upon you. But I know it would be a comfort to me, in your hard-fighting place, to be assured of such sympathy, and therefore only I write.

You have other recreations for your Sundays in the session, I daresay, than to come here. But it is generally a day on which I do not go out, and when we dine at half-past five in the easiest way in the world, and smoke in the peaceablest manner. Perhaps one of these Sundays after Easter you might not be indisposed to begin to dig us out?

And I should like, on a Saturday of your appointing, to get a few of the serviceable men I know—such as I have mentioned—about you here. Will you think of this, too, and suggest a Saturday for our dining together?

I am really ashamed and moved that you should do your part so manfully and be left alone in the conflict. I felt you to be all you are the first moment I saw you. I know you will accept my regard and fidelity for what they are worth.

Dear Layard, very heartily yours.

*Tuesday, Third April, 1855.*

MY DEAR MARIA,—A necessity is upon me now <sup>Mrs.</sup>—as at most times—of wandering about in my <sup>Winter.</sup> old wild way, to think. I could no more resist this on Sunday or yesterday than a man can dispense with food, or a horse can help himself from being driven. I hold my inventive capacity on the stern condition that it must master my whole life, often have complete possession of me, make its own demands upon me, and sometimes, for months together,



put everything else away from me. If I had not known long ago that my place could never be held, unless I were at any moment ready to devote myself to it entirely, I should have dropped out of it very soon. All this I can hardly expect you to understand—or the restlessness and waywardness of an author's mind. You have never seen it before you, or lived with it, or had occasion to think or care about it, and you cannot have the necessary consideration for it. 'It is only half an hour,'—'It is only an afternoon,'—'It is only an evening,' people say to me over and over again; but they don't know that it is impossible to command one's self sometimes to any stipulated and set disposal of five minutes,—or that the mere consciousness of an engagement will sometimes worry a whole day. These are the penalties paid for writing books. Whoever is devoted to an art must be content to deliver himself wholly up to it, and to find his recompense in it. I am grieved if you suspect me of not wanting to see you, but I can't help it; I must go my way whether or no.

I thought you would understand that in sending the card for the box I sent an assurance that there was nothing amiss. I am pleased to find that you were all so interested with the play. My ladies say that the first part is too painful and wants relief. I have been going to see it a dozen times, but have never seen it yet, and never may. Madame Céleste is injured thereby (you see how unreasonable people are!), and says in the green-room, 'M. Dickens est artiste! Mais il n'a jamais vu "Janet Pride!"'

It is like a breath of fresh spring air to know that that unfortunate baby of yours is out of her one close room, and has about half a pint of very doubtful air per day. I could only become her Godfather on the condition that she had five hundred gallons of open air at any rate every day of her life; and you would soon see a rose or two in the face of my other little friend, Ella, if you opened all your doors and windows throughout the whole of all fine weather, from morning to night.

I am going off; I don't know where or how far, to ponder about I don't know what. Sometimes I am half in the mood

to set off for France, sometimes I think I will go and walk about on the seashore for three or four months, sometimes I look towards the Pyrenees, sometimes Switzerland. I made a compact with a great Spanish authority last week, and vowed I would go to Spain. Two days afterwards Layard and I agreed to go to Constantinople when Parliament rises. To-morrow I shall probably discuss with somebody else the idea of going to Greenland or the North Pole. The end of all this, most likely, will be, that I shall shut myself up in some out-of-the-way place I have not yet thought of, and go desperately to work there.

Once upon a time I didn't do such things you say. No. But I have done them through a good many years now, and they have become myself and my life.

Ever affectionately.

TAVISTOCK SQUARE, *Wednesday, Fourth April, 1855.*

MY DEAR COLLINS,—I have read the article in the *Leader* on Napoleon's reception in England with great pleasure and entire concurrence. I think it is forcible and just, and yet states the real case with great moderation. Not knowing of it, I had been speaking to its author on that very subject in the Pit of the Olympic on Saturday night.

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

And, by the bye, as the Devil would have it (for I assume that he is always up to something, and that everything is his fault—I being, as you know, evangelical), I mislaid your letter with Mr. Pigott's address in it, and 'didn't like' to ask himself for it. Do, like an amiable, corroded hermit, send me that piece of information again.

I hope the medical authorities will not—as I may say—cut your nose off to be revenged on your face. You might want it at some future time. It is but natural that the Doctor should be irritated by so much opposition—still, isn't the offending feature in some sort a man and a brother?

The Pantomime was amazingly good, and it really was a comfortable thing to see all conventional dignity so outrageously set at naught. It was astonishingly well done, and extremely funny. Not a man in it who wasn't quite as



good as the Humbugs who pass their lives in doing nothing else. I observed at the Fund Dinner that the actors are in the same condition about it as they were when we played. Idiots!

May the Spring advance with rosy foot, and the voice of the Turtle be shortly heard in the land!

Ever faithfully.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Tuesday, Tenth April, 1855.*

Mr. Austen  
Henry  
Layard.

DEAR LAYARD,—I shall of course observe the strictest silence, at present, in reference to your resolutions. It will be a most acceptable occupation to me to go over them with you, and I have not a doubt of their producing a strong effect out of doors.

There is nothing in the present time at once so galling and so alarming to me as the alienation of the people from their own public affairs. I have no difficulty in understanding it. They have had so little to do with the game through all these years of Parliamentary Reform, that they have sullenly laid down their cards, and taken to looking on. The players who are left at the table do not see beyond it, conceive that gain and loss and all the interest of the play are in their hands, and will never be wiser until they and the table and the lights and the money are all overturned together. And I believe the discontent to be so much the worse for smouldering, instead of blazing openly, that it is extremely like the general mind of France before the breaking out of the first Revolution, and is in danger of being turned by any one of a thousand accidents—a bad harvest—the last strain too much of aristocratic insolence or incapacity—a defeat abroad—a mere chance at home—into such a devil of a conflagration as never has been beheld since.

Meanwhile, all our English tuft-hunting, toad-eating, and other manifestations of accursed gentility—to say nothing of the Lord knows who's defiance of the proven truth before six hundred and fifty men—ARE expressing themselves every day. So, every day, the disgusted millions with this unnatural gloom are confirmed and hardened in the very worst of moods. Finally, round all this is an atmosphere of pov-

erty, hunger, and ignorant desperation, of the mere existence of which perhaps not one man in a thousand of those not actually enveloped in it, through the whole extent of this country, has the least idea.

It seems to me an absolute impossibility to direct the spirit of the people at this pass until it shows itself. If they began to bestir themselves in the vigorous national manner; if they would appear in political reunion, array themselves peacefully but in vast numbers against a system that they know to be rotten altogether, make themselves heard like the sea all round this island, I for one should be in such a movement heart and soul, and should think it a duty of the plainest kind to go along with it, and try to guide it by all possible means. But you can no more help a people who do not help themselves than you can help a man who does not help himself. And until the people can be got up from the lethargy, which is an awful symptom of the advanced state of their disease, I know of nothing that can be done beyond keeping their wrongs continually before them.

I shall hope to see you soon after you come back. Your speeches at Aberdeen are most admirable, manful, and earnest. I would have such speeches at every market-cross, and in every town-hall, and among all sorts and conditions of men; up in the very balloons, and down in the very diving-bells.

Ever, cordially yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Saturday, Fourteenth April, 1855.*

MY DEAR FORSTER,—I cannot express to you Mr. John Forster. how very much delighted I am with the *Steele*. I think it incomparably the best of the series. The pleasanter humanity of the subject may commend it more to one's liking, but that again requires delicate handling, which you have given to it in a most charming manner. It is surely not possible to approach a man with a finer sympathy, and the assertion of the claims of literature throughout is of the noblest and most gallant kind.

I don't agree with you about the serious papers in the *Spectator*, which I think (whether they be Steele's or Addison's) are generally as indifferent as the humour of the



*Spectator* is delightful. And I have always had a notion that Prue understood her husband very well, and held him in consequence, when a fonder woman with less show of caprice must have let him go. But these are points of opinion. The paper is masterly, and all I have got to say is, that if —— had a grain of the honest sentiment with which it overflows, he never would or could have made so great a mistake.

Ever affectionately.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Sunday, Fifteenth April, 1855.*

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

MY DEAR COLLINS,—Hurrah!

I shall be charmed to see you once more in a Normal state, and propose Friday next for our meeting at the Garrick, at a quarter before five. We will then proceed to the Ship and Turtle.

I fell foul of Wills yesterday, for that in ‘dealing with’ the second part of your story [*Sister Rose*] he had not (in two places) ‘indoctrinated’ the Printer with the change of name. He explained to me that on the whole, and calmly regarding all the facts from a politico-economical point of view, it was a more triumphant thing to have two mistakes than none—and, indeed, that, philosophically considered, this was rather the object and province of a periodical.

Faithfully always.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Thursday, Twenty-sixth April, 1855.*

#### ON THE DEATH OF AN INFANT

Mr. Mark  
Lemon.

MY DEAR MARK,—I will call for you at two, and go with you to Highgate, by all means.

Leech and I called on Tuesday evening and left our loves. I have not written to you since, because I thought it best to leave you quiet for a day. I have no need to tell you, my dear fellow, that my thoughts have been constantly with you, and that I have not forgotten (and never shall forget) who sat up with me one night when a little place in my house was left empty.

It is hard to lose any child, but there are many blessed sources of consolation in the loss of a baby.

Ever affectionately yours.

PS.—Our kindest loves to Mrs. Lemon.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Friday, Eleventh May, 1855.*

MY DEAR COLLINS,—I will read the play referring to the Lighthouse with great pleasure if you will send it to me—of course will at any time, with cordial readiness and unaffected interest, do any such thing. . . .

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

I hope to make Folkestone the country quarters for this Autumn. At the end of October I have an idea of removing the caravan to Paris for six months. I wish you would come over too, and take a Bedroom hard by us. It strikes me that a good deal might be done for *Household Words* on that side of the water.

But we shall have plenty of leisure to talk about this at Folkestone.

I have seen nothing of —— since he disarranged the whole metropolitan supply of gas. I have a general idea that he must have been upside down ever since, in some corner—like the groom to whom the Sultan's daughter was to have been sacrificed. He was indeed Great and Grand. I went about the streets all next day laughing like a Pantomime mask. I never did see anything so ridiculous.

The restless condition in which I wander up and down my room with the first page of my new book [*Little Dorrit*] before me defies all description. I feel as if nothing would do me the least good but setting up a Balloon. It might be inflated in the garden in front—but I am afraid of its scarcely clearing those little houses. Ever faithfully.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Sunday, Twentieth May, 1855.*

MY DEAR STANNY,—I have a little lark in contemplation, if you will help it to fly.

Mr.  
Clarkson  
Stanfield,  
R.A.

Collins has done a melodrama (a regular old-style melodrama), in which there is a very good notion. I



am going to act it, as an experiment, in the children's theatre here—I, Mark, Collins, Egg, and my daughter Mary, the whole *dram. pers.*; our families and yours the whole audience; for I want to make the stage large and shouldn't have room for above five-and-twenty spectators. Now, there is only one scene in the piece, and that, my tarry lad, is the inside of a lighthouse. Will you come and paint it for us one night, and we'll all turn to and help? It is a mere wall, of course, but Mark and I have sworn that you must do it. If you will say yes, I should like to have the tiny flats made, after you have looked at the place, and not before. On Wednesday in this week I am good for a steak and the play, if you will make your own appointment here; or any day next week except Thursday. Write me a line in reply. We mean to burst on an astonished world with the melodrama, without any note of preparation. So don't say a syllable to Forster if you should happen to see him.

Ever affectionately yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Tuesday Afternoon, Six o'clock,*  
*Twenty-second May, 1855.*

The same.

MY DEAR STANNY,—Your note came while I was out walking. Even if I had been at home I could not have managed to dine together to-day, being under a beastly engagement to dine out. Unless I hear from you to the contrary, I shall expect you here some time to-morrow, and will remain at home. I only wait your instructions to get the little canvases made. O, what a pity it is not the outside of the light'us, with the sea a-rowling agin it! Never mind, we'll get an effect out of the inside, and there's a storm and shipwreck 'off'; and the great ambition of my life will be achieved at last, in the wearing of a pair of very coarse petticoat trousers. So hoorar for the salt sea, mate, and bouse up!—Ever affectionately,

DICKY.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Twenty-third May, 1855.*

Mr. Mark  
Lemon.

MY DEAR MARK,—Stanny says he is only sorry it is not the outside of the lighthouse with a raging sea and a transparent light. He enters into the project with

the greatest delight, and I think we shall make a capital thing of it.

It now occurs to me that we may as well do a farce too. I should like to get in a little part for Katey, and also for Charley, if it were practicable. What do you think of *Animal Mag.*? You and I in our old parts; Collins, Jeffrey; Charley, the Markis; Katey and Mary (or Georgina), the two ladies? Can you think of anything merry that is better? It ought to be broad, as a relief to the melodrama, unless we could find something funny with a story in it too. I rather incline myself to *Animal Mag.* Will you come round and deliver your sentiments? Ever affectionately.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Thursday, Twenty-fourth May, 1855.

MY DEAR STONE,—Great projects are afoot here for a grown-up play in about three weeks' time. Former schoolroom arrangements to be reversed—large stage and small audience. Stanfield bent on desperate effects, and all day long with his coat off, up to his eyes in distemper colours.

Mr. Frank  
Stone,  
A.R.A.

Will you appear in your celebrated character of Mr. Nightingale? I want to wind up with that popular farce, we all playing our old parts. Ever affectionately.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Twenty-fourth May, 1855.

MY DEAR STONE,—That's right! You will find the words come back very quickly. Why, of course your people are to come, and if Stanfield don't astonish 'em I'm a Dutchman. O Heaven, if you could hear the ideas he proposes to me, making even *my* hair stand on end!

The same.

Will you get Marcus or some similar bright creature to copy out old Nightingale's part for you, and then return the book? This is the prompt-book, the only one I have; and Katey and Georgina (being also in wild excitement) want to write their parts out with all despatch.

Ever affectionately.



## 452 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Thursday, Twenty-fourth May, 1855.*

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

MY DEAR COLLINS,—Lemon assures me that the Parts and Prompt-book are to arrive to-day. Why they have not been here two days I cannot for the life of me make out. In case they *do* come, there is a good deal in the way of clearing the ground that you and I may do before the first Rehearsal. Therefore, will you come and dine at six to-morrow (Friday) and give the evening to it?  
Faithfully ever.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Thursday, Twenty-fourth May, 1855.*

The same.

MY DEAR COLLINS,—I shall expect you to-morrow evening at *Household Words*. I have written a little ballad for Mary—‘The Story of the Ship’s Carpenter and the Little Boy, in the Shipwreck.’

Let us close up with *Mr. Nightingale’s Diary*. Will you look whether you have a book of it, or your part?

Ever faithfully.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Saturday Morning, June Ninth, 1855.*

The same.

MY DEAR COLLINS,—I have had a communication from Stanfield since we parted last night, to the effect that he must have the Stage entirely to himself and his men on Thursday Night. I therefore write round to all the company, to remind them that Monday is virtually our last Rehearsal, and that we shall probably have to do your Play twice on that precious occasion.

Ever heartily yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Tuesday Morning, Nineteenth June, 1855.*

Mrs.  
Trollope.

MY DEAR MRS. TROLLOPE,—I was out of town on Sunday, or I should have answered your note immediately on its arrival. I cannot have the pleasure of seeing the famous ‘medium’ to-night, for I have some theatricals at home. But I fear I shall not in any case be a good subject for the purpose, as I altogether want faith in the thing.

I have not the least belief in the awful unseen world being

available for evening parties at so much per night; and, although I should be ready to receive enlightenment from any source, I must say I have very little hope of it from the spirits who express themselves through mediums, as I have never yet observed them to talk anything but nonsense, of which (as Carlyle would say) there is probably enough in these days of ours, and in all days, among mere mortality.

Very faithfully yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Wednesday, Twentieth June, 1855.*

MY DEAR STANNY,—I write a hasty note to let you know that last night was perfectly wonderful!!!

Mr.  
Clarkson  
Stanfield,  
R.A.

Such an audience! Such a brilliant success from first to last! The Queen had taken it into her head in the morning to go to Chatham, and had carried Phipps with her. He wrote to me asking if it were possible to give him a quarter of an hour. I got through that time before the overture, and he came without any dinner, so influenced by eager curiosity. Lemon and I did every conceivable absurdity, I think, in the farce; and they never left off laughing. At supper I proposed your health, which was drunk with nine times nine, and three cheers over. We then turned to at Scotch reels (having had no exercise), and danced in the maddest way until five this morning.

It is as much as I can do to guide the pen.

Ever most affectionately yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Sunday, Twenty-fourth June, 1855.*

MY DEAR COLLINS,—I am delighted that I have this one ticket to spare out of six that I got for Home. If you will be at the principal door in Brydges Street a little before a quarter to seven, and will there meet my people as they come up, and go in with them, you will find your place secured. The Secretary writes me that it is necessary to be early, to avoid calling attention to this fact, as other places are *not* secured.

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

I am rather flustered about the thing just now, not knowing their ways, or what kind of audience they are, or how



they go on at all. But I'll try them, and the best can do no more.

I have broached a move Kensingtonwards, for changing their arrangements altogether—dropping the *Farce*—putting their piece second—and playing *The Lighthouse* (Original cast and Scenery) first. I don't know whether anything may come of it, but I thought it well to make a discreet point that way. This for the present entirely between ourselves.

Will you tell your brother, with my regards, that I write to Townshend by to-morrow morning's mail? I am not *quite* sure where he is. Ever yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Saturday, Thirtieth June, 1855.*

Mr. W. C.  
Macready.

MY VERY DEAR MACREADY,—I write shortly, after a day's work at my desk, rather than lose a post in answering your enthusiastic, earnest, and young—how young, in all the best side of youth—letter.

To tell you the truth, I confidently expected to hear from you. I knew that if there were a man in the world who would be interested in, and who would approve of, my giving utterance to whatever was in me at this time, it would be you. I was as sure of you as of the sun this morning.

The subject is surrounded by difficulties; the Association is sorely in want of able men; and the resistance of all the phalanx, who have an interest in corruption and mismanagement, is the resistance of a struggle against death. But the great, first, strong necessity is to rouse the people up, to keep them stirring and vigilant, to carry the war dead into the tent of such creatures as ——, and ring into their souls (or what stands for them) that the time for dandy insolence is gone for ever. It may be necessary to come to that law of primogeniture (I have no love for it), or to come to even greater things; but this is the first service to be done, and unless it is done, there is not a chance. For this, and to encourage timid people to come in, I went to Drury Lane the other night; and I wish you had been there and had seen and heard the people.

The Association will be proud to have your name and gift.

When we sat down on the stage the other night, and were waiting a minute or two to begin, I said to Morley, the chairman (a thoroughly fine earnest fellow), 'this reminds me so of one of my dearest friends, with a melancholy so curious, that I don't know whether the place feels familiar to me or strange.' He was full of interest directly, and we went on talking of you until the moment of his getting up to open the business.

They are going to print my speech in a tract form, and send it all over the country. I corrected it for the purpose last night. We are all well. Charley in the City; all the boys at home for the holidays; three prizes brought home triumphantly (one from the Boulogne waters and one from Wimbledon); I taking dives into a new book and runs at leap-frog over *Household Words*; and Anne going to be married—which is the only bad news.

Ever, my dearest Macready, with unalterable affection and attachment,

Your faithful Friend.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Saturday, Thirtieth June, 1855.

MY DEAR MRS. WINTER,—I am truly grieved to hear of your affliction in the loss of your darling baby. But if you be not, even already, so reconciled to the parting from that innocent child for a little while, as to bear it gently and with a softened sorrow, I know that that not unhappy state of mind must soon arise. The death of infants is a release from so much chance and change—from so many casualties and distresses—and is a thing so beautiful in its serenity and peace—that it should not be a bitterness, even in a mother's heart. The simplest and most affecting passage in all the noble history of our Great Master, is His consideration for little children; and in reference to yours, as many millions of bereaved mothers poor and rich will do in reference to theirs until the end of time, you may take the comfort of the generous words, 'And He took a child and set it in the midst of them.'

Mrs.  
Winter.

In a book, by one of the greatest English writers called *A Journey from this World to the Next*, a parent comes to the distant country beyond the grave, and finds the little



girl he had lost so long ago, engaged in building a bower to receive him in, when his aged steps should bring him there at last. He is filled with joy to see her, so young—so bright—so full of promise—and is enraptured to think that she never was old, wan, tearful, withered. This is always one of the sources of consolation in the deaths of children. With no effort of the fancy, with nothing to undo, you will always be able to think of the pretty creature you have lost, *as a child* in heaven.

A poor little baby of mine lies in Highgate cemetery—and I laid her just as you think of laying yours, in the catacombs there, until I made a resting-place for all of us in the free air.

It is better that I should not come to see you. I feel quite sure of that, and will think of you instead.

God bless and comfort you! Mrs. Dickens and her sister send their kindest condolences to yourself and Mr. Winter. I add mine with all my heart.

Affectionately your Friend.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Sunday, Eighth July, 1855.*

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

MY DEAR COLLINS,—I don't know whether you may have heard from Webster,<sup>1</sup> or whether the impression I derived from Mark's manner on Friday may be altogether correct. But it strongly occurred to me that Webster was going to decline the play, and that he really has worried himself into a fear of playing Aaron.

Now, when I got this into my head—which was during the rehearsal—I considered two things:—firstly, how we could best put about the success of the piece more widely and extensively even than it has yet reached; and secondly, how you could be best assisted against a bad production of it hereafter, or no production of it. I thought I saw immediately, that the point would be to have this representation noticed in the newspapers. So I waited until the rehearsal was over and we had profoundly astonished the

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Benjamin Webster, then Manager of the Adelphi Theatre.

family, and then asked Colonel Waugh what he thought of sending some cards for Tuesday to the papers. He highly approved, and I yesterday morning directed Mitchell to send to all the morning papers, and to some of the weekly ones—a dozen in the whole.

I dined at Lord John's yesterday (where Meyerbeer was, and said to me after dinner: 'Ah, mon ami illustre! que c'est noble de vous entendre parler de haute voix morale, à la table d'un ministre!' for I gave them a little bit of truth about Sunday that was like bringing a Sebastopol battery among the polite company), I say, after this long parenthesis, I dined at Lord John's, and found great interest and talk about the play, and about what everybody who had been here had said of it. And I was confirmed in my decision that the thing for you was the invitation to the papers. Hence I write to tell you what I have done..

Ever faithfully.

NOTE (by Mr. Wilkie Collins).—This characteristically kind endeavour to induce managers of theatres to produce *The Lighthouse*, after the amateur performances of the play, was not attended with any immediate success. The work remained in the author's desk until Messrs. Robson and Emden undertook the management of the Olympic Theatre. They opened their first season with *The Lighthouse*: the part of Aaron Gurnock being performed by Mr. F. Robson.—W. C.

3 ALBION VILLAS, FOLKESTONE, KENT,  
Tuesday, Seventeenth July, 1855.

DEAR MADAM,—Your manuscript, entitled a Miss Emily Jolly 'Wife's Story,' has come under my own perusal within these last three or four days. I recognise in it such great merit and unusual promise, and I think it displays so much power and knowledge of the human heart, that I feel a strong interest in you as its writer.

I have begged the gentleman, who is in my confidence as to the transaction of the business of *Household Words*, to return the MS. to you by the post, which (as I hope) will convey this note to you. My object is this: I particularly entreat you to consider the catastrophe. You write to be



read, of course. The close of the story is unnecessarily painful—will throw off numbers of persons who would otherwise read it, and who (as it stands) will be deterred by hearsay from so doing, and is so tremendous a piece of severity, that it will defeat your purpose. All my knowledge and experience, such as they are, lead me straight to the recommendation that you will do well to spare the life of the husband, and of one of the children. Let her suppose the former dead, from seeing him brought in wounded and insensible—lose nothing of the progress of her mental suffering afterwards when that doctor is in attendance upon her—but bring her round at last to the blessed surprise that her husband is still living, and that a repentance which can be worked out, *in the way of atonement for the misery she has occasioned to the man whom she so ill repaid for his love, and made so miserable*, lies before her. So will you soften the reader whom you now as it were harden, and so you will bring tears from many eyes, which can only have their spring in affectionately and gently touched hearts. I am perfectly certain that with this change, all the previous part of your tale will tell for twenty times as much as it can in its present condition. And it is because I believe you have a great fame before you if you do justice to the remarkable ability you possess, that I venture to offer you this advice in what I suppose to be the beginning of your career.

I observe some parts of the story which would be strengthened, even in their psychological interest, by condensation here and there. If you will leave that to me, I will perform the task as conscientiously and carefully as if it were my own. But the suggestion I offer for your acceptance, no one but yourself can act upon.

Let me conclude this hasty note with the plain assurance that I have never been so much surprised and struck by any manuscript I have read, as I have been by yours.

Your faithful Servant.

3 ALBION VILLAS, FOLKESTONE, *Tuesday, Seventeenth July, 1855.*

MY DEAR COLLINS,—Walter goes back to school on the First of August. Will you come out of school to this breezy vacation on the same day, or rather *this day fortnight, July Thirty-first?* for that is the day on which he leaves us, and we begin (here's a parent!) to be able to be comfortable. Why a boy of that age should seem to have on at all times a hundred and fifty pair of double-soled boots, and to be always jumping a bottom stair with the whole hundred and fifty, I don't know. But the woeful fact is within my daily experience.

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

We have a very pleasant little house, overlooking the sea, and I think you will like the place. It rained, in honour of our arrival, with the greatest vigour yesterday. I went out after dinner to buy some nails (you know the arrangements that would be then in progress), and I stopped in the rain, about halfway down a steep, crooked street, like a crippled ladder, to look at a little coachmaker's, where there had just been a sale. Speculating on the insolvent coachmaker's business, and what kind of coaches he could possibly have expected to get orders for in Folkestone, I thought, 'What would bring together fifty people now, in this little street, at this little rainy minute?' On the instant, a brewer's van, with two mad horses in it, and the harness dangling about them—like the trappings of those horses you are acquainted with, who bolted through the starry courts of heaven—dashed by me, and in that instant, such a crowd as would have accumulated in Fleet Street sprang up magically. Men fell out of windows, dived out of doors, plunged down courts, precipitated themselves down steps, came down waterspouts, instead of rain, I think, and I never saw so wonderful an instance of the gregarious effect of an excitement.

A man, a woman, and a child had been thrown out on the horses taking fright, and the reins breaking. The child is dead, and the woman very ill, but will probably recover, and the man has a hand broken and other mischief done to him.

Let me know what Wigan<sup>1</sup> says. If he does not take the

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Alfred Wigan was, at this time, Manager of the Olympic Theatre.



play, and readily too, I would recommend you not to offer it elsewhere. You have gained great reputation by it, have done your position a deal of good, and (as I think) stand so well with it, that it is a pity to engender the notion that you care to stand better.

Ever faithfully.

3 ALBION VILLAS, FOLKESTONE, *Twenty-first July, 1855.*

Miss Emily  
Jolly.

DEAR MADAM,—I did not enter, in detail, on the spirit of the alteration I proposed in your story; because I thought it right that you should think out that for yourself if you applied yourself to the change. I can now assure you that you describe it exactly as I had conceived it; and if I had wanted anything to confirm me in my conviction of its being right, our both seeing it so precisely from the same point of view, would be ample assurance to me.

I would leave her new and altered life to be inferred. It does not appear to me either necessary or practicable (within such limits) to do more than that. Do not be uneasy if you find the alteration demanding time. I shall quite understand that, and my interest will keep. *When* you finish the story, send it to Mr. Wills. Besides being in daily communication with him, I am at the office once a week; and I will go over it in print, before the proof is sent to you.

Very faithfully yours.

FOLKESTONE, *Sixteenth September, 1855.*

Mr. W. H.  
Wills.

MY DEAR WILLS,—Scrooge is delighted to find that Bob Cratchit is enjoying his holiday in such a delightful situation; and he says (with that warmth of nature which has distinguished him since his conversion), 'Make the most of it, Bob; make the most of it.'

(I am just getting to work on No. 3 of the new book, and am in the hideous state of mind belonging to that condition.)

I have not a word of news. I am steeped in my story, and rise and fall by turns into enthusiasm and depression.

Ever faithfully.

FOLKESTONE, *Sunday, Sixteenth September, 1855.*

MY DEAR MRS. WATSON,—This will be a short letter, but I hope not unwelcome. If you knew how often I write to you—in intention—I don't know where you would find room for the correspondence.

The Hon.  
Mrs.  
Watson.

Catherine tells me that you want to know the name of my new book. I cannot bear that you should know it from any one but me. It will not be made public until the end of October; the title is:

‘NOBODY’S FAULT.’

Keep it as the apple of your eye—an expressive form of speech, though I have not the least idea of what it means.

Next, I wish to tell you that I have appointed to read at Peterboro’ on Tuesday, the Eighteenth of December. I have told the Dean that I cannot accept his hospitality, and that I am going with Mr. Wills to the inn, therefore I shall be absolutely at your disposal, and shall be more than disappointed if you don’t stay with us. As the time approaches will you let me know your arrangements, and whether Mr. Wills can bespeak any rooms for you in arranging for me? Georgy will give you our address in Paris as soon as we shall have settled there. We shall leave here, I think, in rather less than a month from this time.

You know my state of mind as well as I do; indeed, if you don’t know it much better, it is not the state of mind I take it to be. How I work, how I walk, how I shut myself up, how I roll down hills and climb up cliffs; how the new story is everywhere—heaving in the sea, flying with the clouds, blowing in the wind; how I settle to nothing, and wonder (in the old way) at my own incomprehensibility. I am getting on pretty well, have done the first two numbers, and am just now beginning the third; which egotistical announcements I make to you because I know you will be interested in them.

I think of inserting an advertisement in the *Times*, offering to submit the Plornishghenter to public competition, and to receive fifty thousand pounds if such another boy cannot



be found, and to pay five pounds (my fortune) if he can.—  
Ever, my dear Mrs. Watson, Affectionately yours.

FOLKESTONE, *Sunday, Thirtieth September, 1855.*

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

MY DEAR COLLINS,—Welcome from the bosom of the deep! If a hornpipe will be acceptable to you at any time (as a reminder of what the three brothers were always doing), I shall be, as the chairman says at Mr. Evans', 'happy to oblige.'

I have almost finished No. 3, in which I have relieved my indignant soul with a scarifier. Sticking at it day after day, I am the *incompletest* letter-writer imaginable—seem to have no idea of holding a pen for any other purpose but that book. My fair Laura has not yet reported concerning Paris, but I should think will have done so before I see you. And now to that point. I purpose being in town on *Monday, the eighth*, when I promised to dine with Forster. Of course the *H. W.* stories are at your disposition. At the office I will tell you the idea of the Christmas number, which will put you in train, I hope, for a story. I have postponed the shipwreck idea for a year, as it seemed to require more force from me than I could well give it with the weight of a new start upon me.

We missed you very much, and the Plorn was quite inconsolable. We slide down Cæsar occasionally.

They launched the boat, the rapid building of which you remember, the other day. All the fishermen in the place, all the nondescripts, and all the boys, pulled at it with ropes from six A.M. to four P.M. Every now and then the ropes broke, and they all fell down in the shingle. The obstinate way in which the beastly thing wouldn't move was so exasperating that I wondered they didn't shoot it, or burn it. Whenever it moved an inch they all cheered; whenever it wouldn't move they all swore. Finally, when it was quite given over, some one tumbled against it accidentally (as it appeared to me, looking out of my window here), and it instantly shot about a mile into the sea, and they all stood looking at it helplessly.

Kind regards to Pigott,<sup>1</sup> in which all unite.

Ever faithfully.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Edward F. S. Pigott, now in the Lord Chamberlain's Office as Examiner of Plays.

FOLKESTONE, *Thursday, Fourth October, 1855.*

MY DEAREST MACREADY,—I have been hammer-  
mering away in that strenuous manner at my book, Mr. W. C.  
Macready.  
that I have had leisure for scarcely any letters but such as I  
have been obliged to write; having a horrible temptation when  
I lay down my book-pen to run out on the breezy downs here,  
tear up the hills, slide down the same, and conduct myself in a  
frenzied manner, for the relief that only exercise gives me.

Your letter to Miss Coutts in behalf of little Miss Warner  
I despatched straightway. She is at present among the  
Pyrenees, and a letter from her crossed that one of mine in  
which I enclosed yours, last week.

Pray stick to that dim notion you have of coming to Paris!  
How delightful it would be to see your aged countenance and  
perfectly bald head in that capital! It will renew your youth  
to visit a theatre (previously dining at the *Trois Frères*) in  
company with the jocund boy who now addresses you. Do,  
do stick to it.

You will be pleased to hear, I know, that Charley has gone  
into Baring's house under very auspicious circumstances.  
Mr. Bates, of that firm, has done me the kindness to place him  
at the brokers' where he was. And when said Bates wrote to  
me a fortnight ago to say that an excellent opening had pre-  
sented itself at Baring's, he added that the brokers gave  
Charley 'so high a character for ability and zeal' that it would  
be unfair to receive him as a volunteer, and he must begin at  
a fifty-pound salary, to which I graciously consented.

As to the suffrage, I have lost hope even in the ballot. We  
appear to me to have proved the failure of representative in-  
stitutions without an educated and advanced people to sup-  
port them. What with teaching people to 'keep in their sta-  
tions,' what with bringing up the soul and body of the land  
to be a good child, or to go to the beershop, to go a-poaching  
and go to the devil; what with having no such thing as a mid-  
dle class (for though we are perpetually bragging of it as  
our safety, it is nothing but a poor fringe on the mantle of  
the upper); what with flunkys, toadyism, letting the most  
contemptible lords come in for all manner of places, reading  
the *Court Circular* for the New Testament, I do reluctantly



believe that the English people are habitually consenting parties to the miserable imbecility into which we have fallen, *and never will help themselves out of it*. Who is to do it, if anybody is, God knows. But at present we are on the down-hill road to being conquered, and the people WILL be content to bear it, sing 'Rule Britannia,' and WILL NOT be saved.

In No. 3 of my new book I have been blowing off a little of indignant steam which would otherwise blow me up, and with God's leave I shall walk in the same all the days of my life; but I have no present political faith or hope—not a grain.

I am going to read the *Carol* here to-morrow in a long carpenter's shop, which looks far more alarming as a place to hear in than the Town Hall at Birmingham.

It is blowing a gale here from the south-west and raining like mad.

Ever most affectionately.

HÔTEL DES BAINS, BOULOGNE, *Sunday, Fourteenth October, 1855.*

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

MY DEAR COLLINS,—Behold me in our old quarters, which are as comfortable as usual. Crossed yesterday. Fine overhead, but heaving and surging sea. The Plorn [a nickname given to his youngest son, Edward Bulwer Lytton Dickens] wonderfully sick, but wonderfully good—making no complaint whatever—feeling the unreasonableness and hopelessness of the Ocean. . . .

The Ostler [in *The Holly Tree*] shall be yours, and I think the sketch involves an extremely good and startling idea. I am not, however, sure but that it trails off in the sudden disappearance of the woman without any result or explanation, and that some such thing may not be wanted for the purpose—unless her never being heard of any more could be so very strikingly described as to supply the place of other culmination to the story. Will you consider that point again?

I purpose being in town on the 13th of November. It is our Audit Day. Perhaps you will dine at the office at half-past five?—Kindest regards from all,

Ever faithfully yours.

2 RUE ST. FLORENTIN, Tuesday, Sixteenth October, 1855.

MY DEAREST CATHERINE,—We have had the most awful job to find a place that would in the least suit us, for Paris is perfectly full, and there is nothing to be got at any sane price. However, we have found two apartments—an *entresol* and a first floor, with a kitchen and servants' room at the top of the house, at No. 49 Avenue des Champs Elysées.

Mrs.  
Charles  
Dickens.

You must be prepared for a regular Continental abode. There is only one window in each room, but the front apartments all look upon the main street of the Champs Elysées, and the view is delightfully cheerful. There are also plenty of rooms. They are not over and above well furnished, but by changing furniture from rooms we don't care for to rooms we *do* care for, we shall be able to make them home-like and presentable. I think the situation itself almost the finest in Paris; and the children will have a window from which to look on the busy life outside.

We could have got a beautiful apartment in the Rue Faubourg St. Honoré for a very little more, most elegantly furnished; but the greater part of it was on a courtyard, and it would never have done for the children. What you have to expect is a regular French residence, which a little habitation will make pretty and comfortable, with nothing showy in it, but with plenty of rooms, and with that wonderful street in which the Barrière de l'Etoile stands outside. The amount of rooms is the great thing, and I believe it to be the place best suited for us, at a not unreasonable price in Paris.

Georgina and Lady Olliffe send their loves.

Ever affectionately.

49 AVENUE DES CHAMPS ELYSÉES, PARIS,  
Sunday Night, Twenty-first October, 1855.

MY DEAR WILLS,—I will try my hand at that paper for *H. W.* to-morrow if I can get a yard of flooring to sit upon; but we have really been in that state of topsy-turvyhood that even that has been an unattainable luxury, and may yet be for eight-and-forty hours or so, for anything I see to the contrary.

Mr. W. H.  
Wills.



I have two floors here—*entresol* and first—in a doll's house, but really pretty within, and the view without, astounding, as you will say when you come. The house is on the Exposition side, about half a quarter of a mile above Franconi's, of course on the other side of the way, and close to the Jardin d'Hiver. We have no fewer than six rooms (besides the back ones) looking on the Champs Elysées, with the wonderful life perpetually flowing up and down. We have no spare-room, but excellent stowage for the whole family, including a capital dressing-room for me, and a really slap-up kitchen near the stairs.

But, sir—but—when Georgina, the servants, and I were here for the first night (Catherine and the rest being at Boulogne), I heard Georgy restless—turned out—asked: 'What's the matter?' 'Oh, it's dreadfully dirty. I can't sleep for the smell of my room'—imagine all my stage-managerial energies multiplied at daybreak by a thousand. Imagine the porter, the porter's wife, the porter's wife's sister, a feeble upholsterer of enormous age from round the corner, and all his workmen (four boys), summoned. Imagine the partners in the proprietorship of the apartment, the martial little man with François-Prussian beard, also summoned. Imagine your inimitable chief briefly explaining that dirt is not in his way, and that he is driven to madness, and that he devotes himself to no coat and a dirty face, until the apartment is thoroughly purified. Imagine co-proprietors at first astounded, then urging that 'it's not the custom,' then wavering, then affected, then confiding their utmost private sorrows to the Inimitable, offering new carpets (accepted), embraces (not accepted), and really responding like French bricks. Sallow, unbrushed, unshorn, awful, stalks the Inimitable through the apartment until last night. Then all the improvements were concluded, and you must picture it as the smallest place you ever saw, but as exquisitely cheerful and vivacious, clean as anything human can be, and with a moving panorama always outside, which is Paris in itself.

I thought we were to give £1700 for the house at Gad's Hill. Are we bound to £1800? Considering the improvements to be made, it is a little too much, isn't it? I have a

strong impression that at the utmost we were only to divide the difference, and not to pass £1750. You will set me right if I am wrong. But I don't think I am.

Ever, my dear Wills, faithfully.

AVENUE DES CHAMPS ÉLYSÉES,  
Wednesday, Twenty-fourth October, 1855.

MY DEAR WILLS,—In the Gad's Hill matter, I <sup>Mr. W. H. Wills.</sup> too would like to try the effect of 'not budging.' *So do not go beyond the £1700.* Considering what I should have to expend on the one hand, and the low price of stock on the other, I do not feel disposed to go beyond that mark. They won't let a purchaser escape for the sake of the £100, I think. And Austin was strongly of opinion, when I saw him last, that £1700 was enough.

You cannot think how pleasant it is to me to find myself generally known and liked here. If I go into a shop to buy anything, and give my card, the officiating priest or priestess brightens up, and says: "*Ah! c'est l'écrivain célèbre! Monsieur porte un nom très-distingué. Mais! je suis honoré et intéressé de voir Monsieur Dick-in. Je lis un des livres de monsieur tous les jours*" (in the *Moniteur*). And a man who brought some little vases home last night, said: '*On connaît bien en France que Monsieur Dick-in prend sa position sur la dignité de la littérature. Ah! c'est grande chose! Et ses caractères*' (this was to Georgina, while he unpacked) '*sont si spirituellement tournées! Cette Madame Tojare*' (Todgers), '*ah! qu'elle est drôle et précisément comme une dame que je connais à Calais.*'

Ever faithfully.

Wednesday, Twenty-first November, 1855.

MY DEAR RÉGNIER,—In thanking you for the <sup>Monsieur Régnier.</sup> box you kindly sent me the day before yesterday, let me thank you a thousand times for the delight we derived from the representation of your beautiful and admirable piece.<sup>1</sup> I have hardly ever been so affected and interested in any theatre. Its construction is in the highest degree ex-

<sup>1</sup> *La Joconde.*



cellent, the interest absorbing, and the whole conducted by a masterly hand to a touching and natural conclusion.

Through the whole story from beginning to end, I recognise the true spirit and feeling of an artist, and I most heartily offer you and your fellow-labourer my felicitations on the success you have achieved. That it will prove a very great and lasting one, I cannot for a moment doubt.

O my friend! If I could see an English actress with but one hundredth part of the nature and art of Madame Plessy, I should believe our English theatre to be in a fair way towards its regeneration. But I have no hope of ever beholding such a phenomenon. I may as well expect ever to see upon an English stage an accomplished artist, able to write and to embody what he writes, like you.

Faithfully yours ever.

49 AVENUE DES CHAMPS ELYSÉES,  
Monday, Third December, 1855.

Madame  
Viardot.

DEAR MADAME VIARDOT,—Mrs. Dickens tells me that you have only borrowed the first number of *Little Dorrit*, and are going to send it back. Pray do nothing of the sort, and allow me to have the great pleasure of sending you the succeeding numbers as they reach me. I have had such delight in your great genius, and have so high an interest in it and admiration of it, that I am proud of the honour of giving you a moment's intellectual pleasure.

Believe me, very faithfully yours.

1855.<sup>1</sup>

Captain  
Morgan.

DEAR FRIEND,—I am always delighted to hear from you. Your genial earnestness does me good to think of. And every day of my life I feel more and more that to be thoroughly in earnest is everything, and to be anything short of it is nothing. You see what we have been doing to our valiant soldiers.<sup>2</sup> You see what miserable humbugs we are. And because we have got in-

<sup>1</sup> This and another Letter to Captain Morgan, which appears under date of 1860, were published in *Scribner's Monthly*, October, 1877.

<sup>2</sup> This letter was written during the Crimean war.

volved in meshes of aristocratic red tape to our unspeakable confusion, loss, and sorrow, the gentlemen who have been so kind as to ruin us are going to give us a day of humiliation and fasting the day after to-morrow. I am sick and sour to think of such things at this age of the world. . . . I am in the first stage of a new book, which consists in going round and round the idea, as you see a bird in his cage go about and about his sugar before he touches it.

Always most cordially yours.

. PARIS, 49 AVENUE DES CHAMPS ELYSÉES,  
Wednesday, Twelfth December, 1855.

MY DEAR COLLINS,—. . . I leave here for town on Saturday, but shall have to start for Peterborough on Monday morning. If you are free on Wednesday (when I shall return from that reading), and will meet me at the *Household Words* office at half-past five, I shall be happy to start on any Haroun Alraschid expedition.

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

Think of my going down to Sheffield on Friday, to read there—in the bitter winter—with journey back to Paris before me!

I thought your Christmas story ['The Ostler'] *immensely improved* in the working out. The botheration of that Number has been prodigious. The general matter was so disappointing, and so impossible to be fitted together or got into the frame, that after I had done the Guest and the Bill, and thought myself free for a little Dorrit again, I had to go back once more (feeling the thing too weak) and do the Boots. Look at said Boots; because I think it's an odd idea, and gets something of the effect of a Fairy Story out of the most unlikely materials. . . .

Every Frenchman who can write a begging letter writes one, and leaves it for this apartment. He first of all buys any literary composition printed in quarto on tea paper with a limp cover, scrawls upon it '*Hommage à Charles Dickens, l'illustre Romancier*'—encloses the whole in a dirty envelope, reeking with tobacco-smoke—and prowls, assassin-like, for



days, in a big cloak and an enormous *cachenez* like a counterpane, about the scraper of the outer door.

Ever faithfully.

Reply as to Wednesday, in note to Tavistock House for receipt there on Sunday.

1856

#### NARRATIVE

CHARLES DICKENS having taken an apartment in Paris for the winter months, 49 Avenue des Champs Elysées, was there with his family until the middle of May. He much enjoyed this winter sojourn, meeting many old friends, making new friends, and interchanging hospitalities with the French artistic world. He had also many friends from England to visit him. Mr. Wilkie Collins had an *appartement de garçon* hard by, and the two companions were constantly together. The Rev. James White and his family also spent their winter in Paris, having taken an apartment at 49 Avenue des Champs Elysées, and the girls of the two families had the same masters, and took their lessons together. After the Whites' departure, Mr. Macready paid Charles Dickens a visit, occupying the vacant apartment.

During this winter Charles Dickens was, however, constantly backwards and forwards between Paris and London on *Household Words* business, and was also at work on his *Little Dorrit*.

While in Paris he sat for his portrait to the great Ary Scheffer. It was exhibited at the Royal Academy Exhibition of this year, and is now in the National Portrait Gallery.

The summer was again spent at Boulogne, and once more at the Villa des Moulineaux, where Charles Dickens received constant visits from his English friends, Mr. Wilkie Collins taking up his quarters for many weeks in a little cottage in the garden; and there the idea of another play, to be acted at Tavistock House, was first started. Many of the letters for

this year have reference to this play, and will show the interest which Charles Dickens took in it, and the immense amount of care and pains given by him to the careful carrying out of this favourite amusement.

The Christmas number of *Household Words*, written by Charles Dickens and Mr. Collins, called *The Wreck of the 'Golden Mary,'* was planned by the two friends during this summer holiday.

It was in this year that one of the great wishes of his life was to be realised, the much-coveted house—Gad's Hill Place—having been purchased by him, and the cheque written on the 14th of March—on a 'Friday,' as he writes to his sister-in-law in a letter of this date. He frequently remarked that all the important, and so far fortunate, events of his life had happened to him on a Friday. So that, contrary to the usual superstition, that day had come to be looked upon by his family as his 'lucky' day.

The allusion to the 'plainness' of Miss Boyle's handwriting is good-humouredly ironical; that lady's writing being by no means famous for its legibility.

The 'Anne' mentioned in the letter to his sister-in-law, which follows the one to Miss Boyle, was the faithful servant who had lived with the family so long; and who, having left to be married the previous year, had found it a very difficult matter to recover from her sorrow at this parting. And the 'godfather's present' was for a son of Mr. Edmund Yates.

The explanation of the remark to Mr. Wills (6th April), that he had paid the money to Mr. Poole, is that Charles Dickens was the trustee through whom the dramatist received his pension.

The letter to the Duke of Devonshire has reference to the peace illuminations after the Crimean war.

The M. Forgues for whom, at Mr. Collins' request, he wrote a short biography of himself, was the editor of the *Revue des Deux Mondes*.

The speech at the London Tavern was on behalf of the Artists' Benevolent Fund.

Miss Kate Macready had sent some clever poems to *House-*



*hold Words*, with which Charles Dickens had been much pleased. He makes allusion to these in the two remaining letters to Mr. Macready.

'I did write it for you' (letter to Mrs. Watson, 17th October), refers to that part of *Little Dorrit* which treats of the visit of the Dorrit family to the Great St. Bernard. An expedition which it will be remembered he made himself, in company with Mr. and Mrs. Watson and other friends.

The letter to Mrs. Horne refers to a joke about the name of a friend of this lady's, who had once been brought by her to Tavistock House. The letter to Mr. Mitton concerns the lighting of the little theatre at Tavistock House.

The last letter for this year is in answer to one from Mr. Kent, asking Charles Dickens to sit to Mr. John Watkins for his photograph. We should add, however, that he did subsequently give this gentleman some sittings.

49 CHAMPS ELYSÉES, Sunday, Sixth January, 1856.

Mr. W. H.  
Wills.

MY DEAR WILLS,—I should like Morley to do a Strike article, and to work into it the greater part of what is here. But I cannot represent myself as holding the opinion that all strikes among this unhappy class of society, who find it so difficult to get a peaceful hearing, are always necessarily wrong, because I don't think so. To open a discussion of the question by saying that the men are '*of course* entirely and painfully in the wrong,' surely would be monstrous in any one. Show them to be in the wrong here, but in the name of the eternal heavens show why, upon the merits of this question. Nor can I possibly adopt the representation that these men are wrong because by throwing themselves out of work they throw other people, possibly without their consent. If such a principle had anything in it, there could have been no civil war, no raising by Hampden of a troop of horse, to the detriment of Buckinghamshire agriculture, no self-sacrifice in the political world. And O, good God, when —— treats of the suffering of wife and children, can he suppose that these mistaken men don't feel it in the depths of their hearts, and don't honestly and honourably, most devoutly and faithfully believe that for those very chil-

dren, when they shall have children, they are bearing all these miseries now!

Ever faithfully.

49 CHAMPS ELYSÉES, PARIS, Monday, Seventh January, 1856.

MY DEAR MARK,—In a piece at the Ambigu, <sup>Mr. Mark Lemon.</sup> called the *Rentrée à Paris*, a mere scene in honour of the return of the troops from the Crimea the other day, there is a novelty which I think it worth letting you know of, as it is easily available, either for a serious or a comic interest—the introduction of a supposed electric telegraph. This scene is the railway terminus at Paris, with the electric telegraph office on the prompt side, and the clerks *with their backs to the audience*—much more real than if they were, as they infallibly would be, staring about the house—working the needles; and the little bell perpetually ringing. There are assembled to greet the soldiers, all the easily and naturally imagined elements of interest—old veteran fathers, young children, agonised mothers, sisters and brothers, girl lovers—each impatient to know of his or her own object of solicitude. Enter to these a certain marquis, full of sympathy for all, who says: ‘My friends, I am one of you. My brother has no commission yet. He is a common soldier. I wait for him as well as all brothers and sisters here wait for *their* brothers. Tell me whom you are expecting.’ Then they all tell him. Then he goes into the telegraph-office, and sends a message down the line to know how long the troops will be. Bell rings. Answer handed out on a slip of paper. ‘Delay on the line. Troops will not arrive for a quarter of an hour.’ General disappointment. ‘But we have this brave electric telegraph, my friends,’ says the marquis. ‘Give me your little messages, and I’ll send them off.’ General rush round the marquis. Exclamations: ‘How’s Henri?’ ‘My love to Georges’; ‘Has Guillaume forgotten Elise?’ ‘Is my son wounded?’ ‘Is my brother promoted?’ etc. etc. Marquis composes tumult. Sends message—such a regiment, such a company—‘Elise’s love to Georges.’ Little bell rings, slip of paper handed out—‘Georges in ten minutes will embrace his Elise. Sends her a thousand kisses.’ Marquis sends message—such a regiment, such a company—‘Is my son wounded?’



Little bell rings. Slip of paper handed out—‘No. He has not yet upon him those marks of bravery in the glorious service of his country which his dear old father bears’ (father being lamed and invalided). Last of all the widowed mother. Marquis sends message—such a regiment, such a company—‘Is my only son safe?’ Little bell rings. Slip of paper handed out—‘He was first upon the heights of Alma.’ General cheer. Bell rings again, another slip of paper handed out. ‘He was made a sergeant at Inkermann.’ Another cheer. Bell rings again, another slip of paper handed out. ‘He was made colour-sergeant at Sebastopol.’ Another cheer. Bell rings again, another slip of paper handed out. ‘He was the first man who leaped with the French banner on the Malakhoff tower.’ Tremendous cheer. Bell rings again, another slip of paper handed out. ‘But he was struck down there by a musket-ball, and ——.’ Troops have proceeded. Will arrive in half a minute after this.’ Mother abandons all hope; general commiseration; troops rush in, down a platform; son only wounded, and embraces her.

As I have said, and as you will see, this is available for any purpose. But done with equal distinction and rapidity, it is a tremendous effect, and got by the simplest means in the world. There is nothing in the piece, but it was impossible not to be moved and excited by the telegraph part of it.

I have written to Beaucourt about taking that breezy house—a little improved—for the summer, and I hope you and yours will come there often and stay there long. My present idea, if nothing should arise to uproot me sooner, is to stay here until the middle of May, then plant the family at Boulogne, and come with Catherine and Georgy home for two or three weeks.

We are up to our knees in mud here. Literally in vehement despair, I walked down the avenue outside the Barrière de l’Etoile here yesterday, and went straight on among the trees. I came back with top-boots of mud on. Nothing will cleanse the streets. Numbers of men and women are for ever scooping and sweeping in them, and they are always one lake of yellow mud. All my trousers go to the tailor’s every day,

and are ravelled out at the heels every night. Washing is awful.

Tell Mrs. Lemon, with my love, that I have bought her some Eau d'Or, in grateful remembrance of her knowing what it is, and crushing the tyrant of her existence by resolutely refusing to be put down when that monster would have silenced her. You may imagine the loves and messages that are now being poured in upon me by all of them, so I will give none of them; though I am pretending to be very scrupulous about it, and am looking (I have no doubt) as if I were writing them down with the greatest care.

Ever affectionately.

49 CHAMPS ELYSÉES, *Saturday, Nineteenth January, 1856.*

MY DEAR COLLINS,—I had no idea you were so far on with your book, and heartily congratulate you on being within sight of land.

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

It is excessively pleasant to me to get your letter, as it opens a perspective of theatrical and other lounging evenings, and also of articles in *Household Words*. It will not be the first time that we shall have got on well in Paris, and I hope it will not be by many a time the last.

I purpose coming over, early in February, and therefore we can return in a jovial manner together. As soon as I know my day of coming over, I will write to you again, and (as the merchants—say Charley—would add) ‘communicate same’ to you.

I have been sitting to Scheffer to-day—conceive this, if you please, with No. 5 upon my soul—four hours!! I am so addle-headed and bored, that if you were here, I should propose an instantaneous rush to the *Trois Frères*. ‘Under existing circumstances I have no consolation..

I think THE portrait<sup>1</sup> is the most astounding thing ever beheld upon this globe. It has been shrieked over by the united family as ‘Oh! the very image!’ I went down to the *entresol* the moment I opened it, and submitted it to the Plorn

<sup>1</sup> Of Mr. Wilkie Collins.



—then engaged, with a half-franc musket, in capturing a Malakhoff of chairs. He looked at it very hard, and gave it as his opinion that it was Misser Hegg. We suppose him to have confounded the Colonel with Jollins. I met Madame Georges Sand the other day at a dinner got up by Madame Viardot for that great purpose. The human mind cannot conceive any one more astonishingly opposed to all my preconceptions. If I had been shown her in a state of repose, and asked what I thought her to be, I should have said: 'The Queen's monthly nurse.' *Au reste*; she has nothing of the *bas bleu* about her, and is very quiet and agreeable.

The way in which mysterious Frenchmen call and want to embrace me, suggests to any one who knows me intimately, such infamous lurking, slinking, getting behind doors, evading, lying—so much mean resort to craven flights, dastard subterfuges, and miserable poltroonery—on my part, that I merely suggest the arrival of cards like this:

*Forgues*  
homme de lettres

*Brousse*  
membre de l'Institut

*Cezille d'Alalanternois*  
tête de drap au 6  
very fine miniature. Dooks also arrive with, on the fly leaf,

*Jaubaud*

*P* Hommage à l'illustre romancier anglais  
Charles De Keane.

—and I then write letters of terrific *empressement*, with assurances of all sorts of profound considerations, and never by any chance become visible to the naked eye.

At the Porte St. Martin they are doing the *Orestes*, put

into French verse by Alexandre Dumas. Really one of the absurdest things I ever saw. The scene of the tomb, with all manner of classical females, in black, grouping themselves on the lid, and on the steps, and on each other, and in every conceivable aspect of obtrusive impossibility, is just like the window of one of those artists in hair, who address the friends of deceased persons. To-morrow week a fête is coming off at the Jardin d'Hiver, next door but one here, which I must certainly go to—the fête of the company of the Folies Nouvelles! The ladies of the company are to keep stalls, and are to sell to Messieurs the Amateurs orange-water and lemonade. Paul le Grand is to promenade among the company dressed as Pierrot. Kalm, the big-faced comic-singer, is to do the like, dressed as a Russian Cossack. The entertainments are to conclude with '*La Polka des Bêtes féroces, par la Troupe entière des Folies Nouvelles.*' I wish, without invasion of the rights of British subjects, or risk of war, — could be seized by French troops, brought over, and made to assist.

The *appartement* has not grown any bigger since you last had the joy of beholding me, and upon my honour and word I live in terror of asking — to dinner, lest she should not be able to get in at the dining-room door. I *think* (am not sure) the dining-room would hold her, if she could be once passed in, but I don't see my way to that. Nevertheless, we manage our own family dinners very snugly there, and have good ones, as I think you will say, every day at half-past five.

I have a notion that we may knock out a *series* of descriptions for *H. W.* without much trouble. It is very difficult to get into the Catacombs, but my name is so well known here that I may succeed. I find that the guillotine can be got set up in private, like Punch's show. What do you think of *that* for an article? I find myself underlining words constantly. It is not my nature. It is mere imbecility after the four hours' sitting.

Ever cordially.

49 CHAMPS ELYSÉES, PARIS, *Twenty-eighth January, 1856.*

MY DEAR MARY,—I am afraid you will think me an abandoned ruffian for not having acknowl-

Miss Mary  
Boyle.



edged your more than handsome warm-hearted letter before now. But, as usual, I have been so occupied, and so glad to get up from my desk and wallow in the mud (at present about six feet deep here); that pleasure correspondence is just the last thing in the world I have had leisure to take to. Business correspondence with all sorts and conditions of men and women, O my Mary! is one of the dragons I am perpetually fighting; and the more I throw it, the more it stands upon its hind legs, rampant, and throws me.

Yes, on that bright cold morning when I left Peterboro', I felt that the best thing I could do was to say that word that I would do anything in an honest way to avoid saying, at one blow, and make off. I was so sorry to leave you all! You can scarcely imagine what a chill and blank I felt on that Monday evening at Rockingham. It was so sad to me, and engendered a constraint so melancholy and peculiar, that I doubt if I were ever much more out of sorts in my life. Next morning, when it was light and sparkling out of doors, I felt more at home again. But when I came in from seeing poor dear Watson's grave, Mrs. Watson asked me to go up in the gallery, which I had last seen in the days of our merry play. We went up, and walked into the very part he had made and was so fond of, and she looked out of one window and I looked out of another, and for the life of me I could not decide in my own heart whether I should console or distress her by going and taking her hand, and saying something of what was naturally in my mind. So I said nothing, and we came out again; on the whole perhaps it was best; for I have no doubt we understood each other very well without speaking a word.

Sheffield was a tremendous success and an admirable audience. They made me a present of table-cutlery after the reading was over; and I came away by the mail-train within three-quarters of an hour, changing my dress and getting on my wrappers partly in the fly, partly at the inn, partly on the platform. When we got among the Lincolnshire fens it began to snow. That changed to sleet, that changed to rain; the frost was all gone as we neared London, and the mud has all come. At two or three o'clock in the morning I stopped



at Peterboro' again, and thought of you all disconsolately. The lady in the refreshment-room was very hard upon me, harder even than those fair enslavers usually are. She gave me a cup of tea as if I were a hyena and she my cruel keeper with a strong dislike to me. I mingled my tears with it, and had a petrified bun of enormous antiquity in miserable meekness.

It is clear to me that climates are gradually assimilating over a great part of the world, and that in the most miserable part of our year there is very little to choose between London and Paris, except that London is not so muddy. I have never seen dirtier or worse weather than we have had here since I returned. In desperation I went out to the Barrières last Sunday on a headlong walk, and came back with my very eyebrows smeared with mud. Georgina is usually invisible during the walking time of the day. A turned-up nose may be seen in the midst of splashes, but nothing more.

I am settling to work again, and my horrible restlessness immediately assails me. It belongs to such times. As I was writing the preceding page, it suddenly came into my head that I would get up and go to Calais. I don't know why; the moment I got there I should want to go somewhere else. But, as my friend the Boots says (see Christmas number *Household Words*): 'When you come to think what a game you've been up to ever since you was in your own cradle, and what a poor sort of chap you are, and how it's always yesterday with you, or else to-morrow, and never to-day, that's where it is.'

My dear Mary, would you favour me with the name and address of the professor that taught you writing, for I want to improve myself? Many a hand have I seen with many characteristics of beauty in it—some loopy, some dashy, some large, some small, some sloping to the right, some sloping to the left, some not sloping at all; but what I like in *your* hand, Mary, is its plainness, it is like print. Them as runs may read just as well as if they stood still. I should have thought it was copper-plate if I hadn't known you. They send all sorts of messages from here, and so do I, with my best regards to Bedgy and pardner and the blessed babies. When shall we meet again, I wonder, and go somewhere!



## 480 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

Ah!—Believe me ever, my dear Mary, yours truly and affectionately,

JOE.

(That doesn't look plain.)

JOE.

49 CHAMPS ELYSÉES, *Thirtieth January, 1856, Wednesday.*

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

MY DEAR COLLINS,—I hope you are 'out of the wood and holloaing.'

I purpose coming to town either on Monday or Tuesday night, and returning (if convenient to you), on the following Sunday or Monday. I will write you as soon as I arrive, and arrange for our devoting an early evening (I should like Wednesday next) to letting our united observation with extended view 'survey mankind from China to Peru.' On second thoughts, shall we appoint Wednesday now? Unless I hear from you to the contrary, I will expect you at *Household Words* at five that day.

Ever faithfully (working hard).

'HOUSEHOLD WORDS,' *Friday, Eighth February, 1856.*

Miss  
Hogarth.

MY DEAR GEORGY,—I must write this at railroad speed, for I have been at it all day, and have numbers of letters to cram into the next half-hour. I began the morning in the City, for the Theatrical Fund; went on to Shepherd's Bush; came back to leave cards for Mr. Baring and Mr. Bates; ran across Piccadilly to Stratton Street, stayed there an hour, and shot off here. Am going to dine with Mark and Webster at half-past four, and finish the evening at the Adelphi.

The dinner was very successful. Charley was in great force, and floored Peter Cunningham and the Audit Office on a question about some bill transactions with Barings'. The other guests were Bradbury and Evans, Shirley Brooks, Forster, and that's all. The dinner admirable. I never had a better. All the wine I sent down from Tavistock House. Anne waited, and looked well and happy, very much brighter altogether. It gave me great pleasure to see her so improved. Just before dinner I got all the letters from home. They could not have arrived more opportunely.

The godfather's present looks charming now it is engraved, and John is just now going off to take it to Mrs. Yates. Tomorrow Wills and I are going to Gad's Hill. It will occupy the whole day, and will just leave me time to get home to dress for dinner.

And that's all that I have to say, except that I am grieved to hear about the Plorn's black eye, and fear that I shall find it in the green and purple state on my return.

Ever affectionately.

49 CHAMPS ELYSÉES, PARIS, *Tuesday, Twelfth February, 1856.*

MY DEAR COLLINS,—I am delighted to receive your letter—which is just come to hand—and heartily congratulate you upon it. I have no doubt you will soon appear. I would recommend you, unless the Boulogne Boat serves to a marvel, to come by the Calais route—the day mail. Because in the winter there are no special trains on that Boulogne line in France, and waiting at Boulogne is a bore. The Pavilion is all ready, and is a wonder. Upon my word, it is the snuggest oddity I ever saw—the look-out from it the most wonderful in the world.

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

We had a pleasant trip, and the best dinner at the 'Bang' [Hôtel des Bains], Boulogne, I ever sat down to.

So looking out for your next letter 'advising self' of your coming,

Ever faithfully.

49 CHAMPS ELYSÉES, PARIS, *Sunday, Twenty-fourth February, 1856.*

MY DEAR COLLINS,—The Post still coming in to-day without any intelligence from you, I am getting quite uneasy. From day to day I have hoped to hear of your recovery, and have forborne to write, lest I should unintentionally make the time seem longer to you. But I am now so very anxious to know how you are that I cannot hold my hand any longer. So pray let me know by return. And if you should unhappily be too unwell to write yourself, pray get your brother to represent you.

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.



I cannot tell you how unfortunate I feel this to be, or how disconsolately I look at the uninhabited Pavilion.

Ever faithfully.

'HOUSEHOLD WORDS' OFFICE, *Sixth March*, 1856.

Mr.  
Douglas  
Jerrold.

MY DEAR JERROLD,—Buckstone has been with me to-day in a state of demi-semi-distractedness, by reason of Macready's dreading his asthma so much as to excuse himself (of necessity, I know) from taking the chair for the fund on the occasion of their next dinner. I have promised to back Buckstone's entreaty to you to take it; and although I know that you have an objection which you once communicated to me, I still hold (as I did then) that it is a reason *for*, and not against. Pray reconsider the point. Your position in connection with dramatic literature has always suggested to me that there would be a great fitness and grace in your appearing in this post. I am convinced that the public would regard it in that light, and I particularly ask you to reflect that we never can do battle with the Lords, if we will not bestow ourselves to go into places which they have long monopolised. Now pray discuss this matter with yourself once more. If you can come to a favourable conclusion I shall be really delighted, and will of course come from Paris to be by you; if you cannot come to a favourable conclusion I shall be really sorry, though I of course most readily defer to your right to regard such a matter from your own point of view.

Ever faithfully yours.

'HOUSEHOLD WORDS,' *Friday, Fourteenth March*, 1856.

Miss  
Hogarth.

MY DEAR GEORGY,—I am amazed to hear of the snow (I don't know why, but it excited John this morning beyond measure); though we have had the same east wind here, and *the* cold and *my* cold have both been intense.

Yesterday evening Webster, Mark, Stanny, and I went to the Olympic, where the Wigans ranged us in a row in a gorgeous and immense private box, and where we saw *Still Waters Run Deep*. I laughed (in a conspicuous manner) to that extent at Emery, when he received the dinner-company, that

the people were more amused by me than by the piece. I don't think I ever saw anything meant to be funny that struck me as so extraordinarily droll. I couldn't get over it at all. After the piece we went round, by Wigan's invitation, to drink with him. It being positively impossible to get Stanny off the stage, we stood in the wings during the burlesque. Mrs. Wigan seemed really glad to see her old manager, and the company overwhelmed him with embraces. They had nearly all been at the meeting in the morning.

This day I have paid the purchase-money for Gad's Hill Place. After drawing the cheque, I turned round to give it to Wills (£1790), and said: 'Now isn't it an extraordinary thing—look at the day—Friday! I have been nearly drawing it half a dozen times, when the lawyers have not been ready, and here it comes round upon a Friday, as a matter of course.'

Kiss the noble Plorn a dozen times for me, and tell him I drank his health yesterday, and wished him many happy returns of the day; also that I hope he will not have broken all his toys before I come back. Ever affectionately.

49 CHAMPS ELYSÉES, PARIS,  
*Saturday, Twenty-second March, 1856.*

MY DEAR MACREADY,—I want you—you being quite well again, as I trust you are, and resolute to come to Paris—so to arrange your order of march as to let me know beforehand when you will come and how long you will stay. We owe Scribe and his wife a dinner, and I should like to pay the debt when you are with us. Ary Scheffer too would be delighted to see you again. If I could arrange for a certain day I would secure them. We cannot afford (you and I, I mean) to keep much company, because we shall have to look in at a theatre or so, I daresay!

Mr. W. G.  
Macready.

It would suit my work best, if I could keep myself clear until Monday, the Seventh of April. But in case that day should be too late for the beginning of your brief visit with a deference to any other engagements you have in contemplation, then fix an earlier one, and I will make *Little Dorrit*



curtsy to it. My recent visit to London and my having only just now come back have thrown me a little behindhand: but I hope to come up with a wet sail in a few days.

You should have seen the ruins of Covent Garden Theatre! I went in the moment I got to London—four days after the fire. Although the audience part and the stage were so tremendously burnt out that there was not a piece of wood half the size of a lucifer-match for the eye to rest on, though nothing whatever remained but bricks and smelted iron lying on a great black desert, the theatre still looked so wonderfully like its old self grown gigantic that I never saw so strange a sight. The wall dividing the front from the stage still remained, and the iron pass-doors stood ajar in an impossible and inaccessible frame. The arches that supported the stage were there, and the arches that supported the pit; and in the centre of the latter lay something like a Titanic grape-vine that a hurricane had pulled up by the roots, twisted, and flung down there; this was the great chandelier. Gye had kept the men's wardrobe at the top of the house over the great entrance staircase; when the roof fell in it came down bodily, and all that part of the ruins was like an old Babylonian pavement, bright rays tessellating the black ground, sometimes in pieces so large that I could make out the clothes in the *Trovatore*.

I should run on for a couple of hours if I had to describe the spectacle as I saw it, wherefore I will immediately muzzle myself. All Parisian novelties you shall see and hear for yourself.—Ever, my dearest Macready,

Your affectionate Friend.

PS.—Mr. F.'s aunt sends her defiant respects.

49 AVENUE DES CHAMPS ÉLYSÉES, PARIS,  
*Thursday Night, Twenty-seventh March, 1856.*  
(*After post time.*)

Mr. W. C.  
Macready.

MY DEAREST MACREADY,—If I had had any idea of your coming (see how naturally I use the word when I am three hundred miles off!) to London so soon, I would never have written one word about the jump over next

week. I am vexed that I did so, but as I did I will not now propose a change in the arrangements, as I know how methodical you tremendously old fellows are. That's your secret I suspect. That's the way in which the blood of the Mirabels mounts in your aged veins, even at your time of life.

How charmed I shall be to see you, and we all shall be, I will not attempt to say. On that expected Sunday you will lunch at Amiens but not dine, because we shall wait dinner for you, and you will merely have to tell that driver in the glazed hat to come straight here. When the Whites left I added their little apartment to this little apartment, consequently you shall have a snug bedroom (is it not waiting expressly for you?) overlooking the Champs Elysées. As to the arm-chair in my heart, no man on earth—but, good God! you know all about it.

You will find us in the queerest of little rooms all alone, except that the son of Collins the painter (who writes a good deal in *Household Words*) dines with us every day. Scheffer and Scribe shall be admitted for one evening, because they know how to appreciate you. The Emperor we will not ask unless you expressly wish it; it makes a fuss.

If you have no appointed hotel at Boulogne, go to the Hôtel des Bains, there demand 'Marguerite,' and tell her that I commended you to her special care. It is the best house within my experience in France; Marguerite the best house-keeper in the world.

I shall charge at *Little Dorrit* to-morrow with new spirits. The sight of you is good for my boyish eyes, and the thought of you for my dawning mind. Give the enclosed lines a welcome, then send them on to Sherborne.

Ever yours, most affectionately and truly.

49 CHAMPS ELYSÉES, PARIS, *Sunday, Sixth April, 1856.*

#### CHRISTMAS

MY DEAR WILLS,—Collins and I have a mighty original notion (mine in the beginning) for another play at Tavistock House. I propose opening on

Mr. W. H.  
Wills.



Twelfth Night the theatrical season of that great establishment. But now a tremendous question. Is

MRS. WILLS!

game to do a Scotch housekeeper, in a supposed country-house, with Mary, Katey, Georgina, etc.? If she can screw her courage up to saying 'Yes,' that country-house opens the piece in a singular way, and that Scotch housekeeper's part shall flow from the present pen. If she says 'No' (but she won't), no Scotch housekeeper can be. The Tavistock House season of four nights pauses for a reply. Scotch song (new and original) of Scotch housekeeper would pervade the piece.

You

had better pause for breath.

Ever faithfully.

CHAMPS ELYSÉES, *Sunday, April Thirteenth, 1856.*

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

MY DEAR COLLINS,—We checked you off at the various points of your journey all day, but never dreamed of the half gale. You must have had an abominable passage with that convivial club. My soul sickens at the thought of it; and the smell seizes hold of the bridge of my nose exactly halfway up, and won't let it go again.

Your portress duly appeared with the small account and your note. I paid her immediately, of course, and she departed rejoicing. The Pavilion looks very desolate, and nobody has taken it as yet. Macready left us at seven yesterday morning, and I afterwards took a long country walk to get into train for work. It was a noble spring day, and the air most delightful. But I found the evening sufficiently dull, and indeed we all miss you very much. . . .

Macready went on Friday to the Rehearsal of *Comme il vous plaira* [*As You Like It*], which was produced last night. His account of it was absolutely stunning. The speech of the Seven Ages delivered as a light comedy joke; Jacques

at the Court of the Reigning Duke instead of the banished one, and winding up the thing by *marrying Celia!* Everything as wide of Shakespeare as possible, and confirming my previous impression that she just knew nothing at all about it. She was to have been here on Friday evening, but had 'la migraine' (of which I think you have heard before); but Régnier said, as to the piece, 'La pièce. Il n'y a point de pièce,' tapped his forehead with great violence, and threw whatever liquid came out into the air, as an offering to the offended gods. Girardin said, 'Qu'il l'avait trouvé à la répétition très intéressante, très intéressante, très intéressante!'—and said nothing more the whole evening. I dine at another of his prodigious banquets to-morrow.

I am very anxious to know what your Doctor says. If he should fail to set you up by the 3rd or 4th of May, for me, I shall consider him a humbug. It occurs to me to mention that if you don't get settled in May, the Hogarths will then leave Tavistock House to me and Charley, and you know how easily and amply it can accommodate you. Pray don't forget that it is available for your quarters. There will be two or three large airy bedrooms with nobody to occupy them, and the range of the whole sheeted house besides. The Pavilion of the Moulineaux I shall, of course, reserve for your summer occupation and work. Talking of which latter, I am reminded to say that the Scotch House-keeper is secured.

You know exactly where I am sitting, what I am seeing, what I am hearing, what is going on around me in every way. I have not a scrap of news, except that Poole, at the Français, complained bitterly to Macready of your humble servant's neglect, which, considering that he would unquestionably be in some remote English workhouse but for me, I think characteristic. Macready's reply to him appears to have been: 'Er—really—er—no Poole;—er—must excuse me—host—um—friend—er—great affection—um—cannot permit—er—must therefore distinctly beg . . .'

All unite in kindest regard and best wishes for your speedily coming all right again. Ever faithfully.



I enclose a letter from Forgues. The book of *The Light-house* accompanies it, which I will bring with me.

PPS.—According to a highly illegible note I have from Forgues; it would seem that I ought to send you the book with some idea of your sending it back to me to send to him. The little Lemons therefore shall bring the book with them.

CHAMPS ELYSÉES, *Tuesday, Twenty-second April, 1856.*

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

MY DEAR COLLINS,—I have been quite taken aback by your account of your alarming seizure; and have only become reassured again, firstly by the good fortune of your having left here and got so near your doctor; secondly, by your hopefulness of now making head in the right direction. On the 3rd or 4th I purpose being in town, and I need not say that I shall forthwith come to look after my old Patient.

On Sunday, to my infinite amazement, Townshend appeared. He has changed his plans, and is staying in Paris a week, before going to Town for a couple of months. He dined here on Sunday, and placidly ate and drank in the most vigorous manner, and mildly laid out a terrific perspective of projects for carrying me off to the Theatre every night. But in the morning he found himself with dawnings of Bronchitis, and is now luxuriously laid up in lavender at his Hotel—confining himself entirely to precious stones, chicken, and fragrant wines qualified with iced waters.

Last Friday I took Mrs. Dickens, Georgina, and Mary and Katey, to dine at the Trois Frères. We then, sir, went off to the Français, to see *Comme il vous plaira*—which is a kind of Theatrical Representation that I think might be got up, with great completeness, by the Patients in the asylum for Idiots. Dreariness is no word for it, vacancy is no word for it, gammon is no word for it, there is no word for it. Nobody has anything to do but to sit upon as many grey stones as he can. When Jacques had sat upon seventy-seven stones and forty-two roots of trees (which was at the end of the second act), we came away. He had by that time

been made violent love to by Celia, had shown himself in every phase of his existence to be utterly unknown to Shakespeare, had made the speech about the Seven Ages out of its right place, and apropos of nothing on earth, and had in all respects conducted himself like a brutalised, benighted, and besotted Beast.

A wonderful dinner at Girardin's last Monday, with only one new (but appropriate) feature in it. When we went into the drawing-room after the banquet, which had terminated in a flower-pot out of a ballet being set before every guest, piled to the brim with the ruddiest fresh strawberries, he asked me if I would come into another room (a chamber of no account—rather like the last Scene in *Gustavus*) and smoke a cigar. On my replying yes, he opened, with a key attached to his watch-chain, a species of mahogany cave, which appeared to me to extend under the Champs Elysées, and in which were piled about four hundred thousand inestimable and unattainable cigars, in bundles or bales of about a thousand each.

Yesterday I dined at the bookseller's with the body of Translators engaged on my new Edition—one of them a lady, young and pretty. (I hope, by the bye, judging from the questions which they asked me and which I asked them, that it will be really well done.) Among them was an extremely amiable old Savant, who occasionally expressed himself in a foreign tongue which I supposed to be Russian (I thought he had something to do with the congress perhaps), but which my host told me, when I came away, was English! We wallowed in an odd sort of dinner, which would have been splashy if it hadn't been too sticky. Salmon appeared late in the evening, and unforeseen creatures of the lobster species strayed in after the pudding. It was very hospitable and good-natured though, and we all got on in the friendliest way. Please to imagine me for three mortal hours incessantly holding forth to the translators, and, among other things, addressing them in a neat and appropriate (French) speech. I came home quite light-headed.

On Saturday night I paid three francs at the door of that place where we saw the wrestling, and went in, at eleven



o'clock, to a Ball. Much the same as our own National Argyle Rooms. Some pretty faces, but all of two classes—wicked and coldly calculating, or haggard and wretched in their worn beauty. Among the latter was a woman of thirty or so, in an Indian shawl, who never stirred from a seat in a corner all the time I was there. Handsome, regardless, brooding, and yet with some nobler qualities in her forehead. I mean to walk about to-night and look for her. I didn't speak to her there, but I have a fancy that I should like to know more about her. Never shall, I suppose.

Franconi's I have been to again, of course. Nowhere else. I finished 'that' No. as soon as Macready went away, and have done something for *Household Words* next week, called 'Proposals for a National Jest-Book,' that I take rather kindly to. The first blank page of *Little Dorrit*, No. 8, now eyes me on this desk with a pressing curiosity. It will get nothing out of me to-day, I distinctly perceive.

That swearing of the Academy Carpenters is the best thing of its kind I ever heard of. I suppose the oath to be administered by little Knight. It's my belief that the stout Porter, now no more, wouldn't have taken it. Our cook's going. Says she 'ain't strong enough for BooLone.' I don't know what there is particularly trying in that climate. The nice little Nurse who goes into all manner of shops without knowing one word of French, took some lace to be mended the other day, and the Shopkeeper, impressed with the idea that she had come to sell it, *would* give her money; with which she returned weeping, believing it (until explanation ensued) to be the price of shame.

All send kindest regard.

Ever faithfully.

SHIP HOTEL, DOVER, *Thirtieth April*, 1856.

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

MY DEAR COLLINS,—Wills brought me your letter this morning, and I am very much interested in knowing what o'clock it is by the Watch with the brass tail to it. You know I am not in the habit of making professions, but I have so strong an interest in you and so true a regard for you that nothing can come amiss in the way of information as to your well-doing.

How I wish you were well now! For here I am in two of the most charming rooms (a third, a bedroom you could have occupied, close by), overlooking the sea in the gayest way. And here I shall be, for a change, till Saturday. And here we might have been, drinking confusion to Baronetcies, and resolving never to pluck a leaf from the Toady Tree, till this very small world shall have rolled us off! Never mind. All to come—in the fulness of the Arctic Seasons.

I take, as the people say in the comedies of eighty years ago, 'hugely' to the idea you have suggested to Wills. But you mustn't do anything until you feel it a pleasure; from which sensation (and the disappearance of the East Wind until next winter) I shall date your coming round the corner with a great velocity.

On Saturday morning I shall be in town about eleven, and will come on to Howland Street about one. Many thanks for your bulletin academical, which I have despatched straightway to Ary Scheffer.

They were all blooming in Paris yesterday morning. I took the Plorn out in a cabriolet the day before, and his observations on life in general were wonderful.

Ever yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, Monday, Fifth May, 1856.

MY DEAR CATHERINE,—I did nothing at Dover (except for *Household Words*), and have not begun *Little Dorrit*, No. 8, yet. But I took twenty-mile walks in the fresh air, and perhaps in the long run did better than if I had been at work. The report concerning Scheffer's portrait I had from Ward. It is in the best place in the largest room, but I find the *general* impression of the artists exactly mine. They almost all say that it wants something; that nobody could mistake whom it was meant for, but that it has something disappointing in it, etc. etc. Stanfield likes it better than any one of the other painters, I think. His own picture is magnificent. And Frith, in a 'Little Child's Birthday Party,' is quite delightful. There are many interesting pictures. When you see Scheffer, tell him from me that Eastlake, in his speech at the dinner, re-

Mrs.  
Charles  
Dickens.



ferred to the portrait as 'a contribution from a distinguished man of genius in France, worthy of himself and of his subject.' The school-room and dining-room I have brought into habitable condition and comfortable appearance. Charley and I breakfast at half-past eight, and meet again at dinner when he does not dine in the City, or has no engagement. He looks very well.

The audiences at Gye's are described to me as absolute marvels of coldness. No signs of emotion can be hammered out of them. Panizzi sat next me at the Academy dinner, and took it very ill that I disparaged —. The amateurs here are getting up another pantomime, but quarrel so violently among themselves that I doubt its ever getting on the stage. Webster expounded his scheme for rebuilding the Adelphi to Stanfield and myself last night, and I felt bound to tell him that I thought it wrong from beginning to end. This is all the theatrical news I know.

Ever affectionately.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Monday, Fifth May, 1856.*

Miss  
Hogarth.

MY DEAR GEORGY,—You will not be much surprised to hear that I have done nothing yet—(except for *H. W.*), and have only just settled down into a corner of the schoolroom. The extent to which John and I wallowed in dust for four hours yesterday morning, getting things neat and comfortable about us, you may faintly imagine. At four in the afternoon came Stanfield, to whom I no sooner described the notion of the new play, than he immediately upset all my new arrangements by making a proscenium of the chairs, and planning the scenery with walking-sticks. One of the least things he did was getting on the top of the long table, and hanging over the bar in the middle window where that top sash opens, as if he had got a hinge in the middle of his body. He is immensely excited on the subject. Mark has a farce ready for the managerial perusal, but it won't do.

I went to Dover theatre on Friday night, which was a miserable spectacle. The pit is boarded over, and it is a drinking and smoking place. It was 'for the benefit of Mrs.

——,' and the town had been very extensively placarded with 'Don't forget Friday.' I made out four and ninepence (I am serious) in the house, when I went in. We may have warmed up in the course of the evening to twelve shillings. A Jew played the grand piano; Mrs. —— sang no end of songs (with not a bad voice, poor creature); Mr. —— sang comic songs fearfully, and danced clog hornpipes capitally; and a miserable woman, shivering in a shawl and bonnet, sat in the side-boxes all the evening, nursing Master ——, aged seven months. It was a most forlorn business, and I should have contributed a sovereign to the treasury if I had known how.

I walked to Deal and back that day, and on the previous day walked over the downs towards Canterbury in a gale of wind. It was better than still weather after all, being wonderfully fresh and free.

If the Plorn were sitting at this schoolroom window in the corner, he would see more cats in an hour than he ever saw in his life. I never saw so many, I think, as I have seen since yesterday morning.

There is a painful picture of a great deal of merit (Egg has bought it) in the exhibition, painted by the man who did those little interiors of Forster's. It is called 'The Death of Chatterton.' The dead figure is a good deal like Arthur Stone; and I was touched on Saturday to see that tender old file standing before it, crying under his spectacles at the idea of seeing his son dead. It was a very tender manifestation of his gentle heart.

This sums up my news, which is no news at all. Kiss the Plorn for me, and expound to him that I am always looking forward to meeting him again, among the birds and flowers in the garden on the side of the hill at Boulogne.

Ever affectionately.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Monday, Nineteenth May, 1856.*

GENTLEMEN,—I have received a letter signed by you (which I assume to be written mainly on behalf of what are called Working-Men and their families) inviting me to attend a meeting in our Parish Ves-

Mr. T.  
Ross.  
Mr. J.  
Kenny.



try Hall this evening on the subject of the stoppage of the Sunday bands in the Parks.

I thoroughly agree with you that those bands have afforded an innocent and healthful enjoyment on the Sunday afternoon, to which the people have a right. But I think it essential that the working people should, of themselves and by themselves, assert that right. They have been informed, on the high authority of their first Minister (lately rather in want of House of Commons votes, I am told), that they are almost indifferent to it. The correction of that mistake, if official omniscience can be mistaken, lies with themselves. In case it should be considered by the meeting, which I prefer for this reason not to attend, expedient to unite with other Metropolitan parishes in forming a fund for the payment of such expenses as may be incurred in peaceably and numerously representing to the governing powers that the harmless recreation they have taken away is very much wanted, I beg you to put down my name as a subscriber of ten pounds.—And I am,

Your faithful Servant.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Sunday, First June, 1856.*

The Duke  
of Devon-  
shire.

MY DEAR DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE,—Allow me to thank you with all my heart for your kind remembrance of me on Thursday night. My house was already engaged to Miss Coutts', and I to—the top of St. Paul's, where the sight was most wonderful! But seeing that your cards gave me leave to present some person not named, I conferred them on my excellent friend Dr. Elliotson, whom I found with some fireworkless little boys in a desolate condition, and raised to the seventh heaven of happiness. You are so fond of making people happy, that I am sure you approve.      Always your faithful and much obliged.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Sixth June, 1856.*

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

MY DEAR COLLINS,—I have never seen anything about myself in print which has much correctness in it—any biographical account of myself I mean. I do not supply such particulars when I am asked for them by editors and compilers, simply because I

am asked for them every day. If you want to prime Forgues, you may tell him without fear of anything wrong, that I was born at Portsmouth on the Seventh of February, 1812; that my father was in the Navy Pay Office; that I was taken by him to Chatham when I was very young, and lived and was educated there till I was twelve or thirteen, I suppose; that I was then put to a school near London, where (as at other places) I distinguished myself like a brick; that I was put in the office of a solicitor, a friend of my father's, and didn't much like it: and after a couple of years (as well as I can remember) applied myself with a celestial or diabolical energy to the study of such things as would qualify me to be a first-rate parliamentary reporter—at that time a calling pursued by many clever men who were young at the Bar; that I made my *début* in the gallery (at about eighteen, I suppose), engaged on a voluminous publication no longer in existence, called the *Mirror of Parliament*; that when the *Morning Chronicle* was purchased by Sir John Easthope, and acquired a large circulation, I was engaged there, and that I remained there until I had begun to publish *Pickwick*, when I found myself in a condition to relinquish that part of my labours; that I left the reputation behind me of being the best and most rapid reporter ever known, and that I could do anything in that way under any sort of circumstances, and often did. (I daresay I am at this present writing the best shorthand writer in the world.)

That I began, without any interest or introduction of any kind, to write fugitive pieces for the old *Monthly Magazine*, when I was in the gallery for the *Mirror of Parliament*; that my faculty for descriptive writing was seized upon the moment I joined the *Morning Chronicle*, and that I was liberally paid there and handsomely acknowledged, and wrote the greater part of the short descriptive *Sketches by Boz* in that paper; that I had been a writer when I was a mere baby, and always an actor from the same age; that I married the daughter of a writer to the signet in Edinburgh, who was the great friend and assistant of Scott, and who first made Lockhart known to him.

And that here I am.



Finally, if you want any dates of publication of books, tell Wills and he'll get them for you.

This is the first time I ever set down even these particulars, and, glancing them over, I feel like a wild beast in a caravan describing himself in the keeper's absence.

Ever faithfully.

PS.—I made a speech last night at the London Tavern, at the end of which all the company sat holding their napkins to their eyes with one hand, and putting the other into their pockets. A hundred people or so contributed nine hundred pounds then and there.

VILLA DES MOULINEAUX, BOULOGNE, *Sunday, Fifteenth June, 1856,*

Mr. Mark  
Lemon.

MY DEAR OLD BOY,—This place is beautiful—a burst of roses. Your friend Beaucourt (who *will not* put on his hat) has thinned the trees and greatly improved the garden. Upon my life, I believe there are at least twenty distinct smoking-spots expressly made in it.

And as soon as you can see your day in next month for coming over with Stanny and Webster, will you let them both know?

There is a fête here to-night in honor of the Imperial baptism, and there will be another to-morrow. The Plorn has put on two bits of ribbon (one pink and one blue), which he calls 'companys,' to celebrate the occasion. The fact that the receipts of the fêtes are to be given to the sufferers by the late floods reminds me that you will find at the passport office a tin-box, condescendingly and considerably labelled in English:

FOR THE OVERFLOWINGS,

which the chief officer clearly believes to mean, for the sufferers from the inundations.

I observe more 'Mingles' in the laundresses' shops, and one inscription, which looks like the name of a duet or chorus in a playbill, 'Here they mingle.'

And that is all my present intelligence.

Ever affectionately.

'H. W.' OFFICE, *Second July*, 1856.

MY DEAR MARK,—I am concerned to hear that <sup>Mr. Mark</sup> you are ill, that you sit down before fires and <sup>Lemon.</sup> shiver, and that you have stated times for doing so, like the demons in the melodramas, and that you mean to take a week to get well in.

Make haste about it, like a dear fellow, and keep up your spirits, because I have made a bargain with Stanny and Webster that they shall come to Boulogne to-morrow week, Thursday the Tenth, and stay a week. And you know how much pleasure we shall all miss if you are not among us—at least for some part of the time.

If you find any unusually light appearance in the air at Brighton, it is a distant refraction (I have no doubt) of the gorgeous and shining surface of Tavistock House, now transcendently painted. The theatre partition is put up, and is a work of such terrific solidity, that I suppose it will be dug up, ages hence, from the ruins of London, by that Australian of Macaulay's who is to be impressed by its ashes. I have wandered through the spectral halls of the Tavistock mansion two nights, with feelings of the profoundest depression. I have breakfasted there, like a criminal in Pentonville (only not so well). It is more like Westminster Abbey by midnight than the lowest-spirited man—say you at present for example—can well imagine.

There has been a wonderful robbery at Folkestone, by the new manager of the Pavilion, who succeeded Giovannini. He had in keeping £16,000 of a foreigner's, and bolted with it, as he supposed, but in reality with only £1400 of it. The Frenchman had previously bolted with the whole, which was the property of his mother. With him to England the Frenchman brought a 'lady,' who was, all the time and at the same time, endeavouring to steal all the money from him and bolt with it herself. The details are amazing, and all the money (a few pounds excepted) has been got back.—

Ever, my dear Boy,

Your affectionate Friend.



TAVISTOCK HOUSE,<sup>1</sup> LONDON, *Fifth July*, 1856.

Mr.

Washington  
Irving.

MY DEAR IRVING,—If you knew how often I write to you individually and personally in my books, you would be no more surprised in seeing this note than you were in seeing me do my duty by that flowery julep (in what I dreamily apprehend to have been a former state of existence) at Baltimore.

Will you let me present to you a cousin of mine, Mr. B——, who is associated with a merchant's house in New York? Of course he wants to see you, and know you. How can *I* wonder at that? How can anybody?

I had a long talk with Leslie at the last Academy dinner (having previously been with him in Paris), and he told me that you were flourishing. I suppose you know that he wears a moustache—so do I for the matter of that, and a beard too—and that he looks like a portrait of Don Quixote.

Holland House has four-and-twenty youthful pages in it now—twelve for my lord, and twelve for my lady; and no clergyman coils his leg up under his chair all dinner-time, and begins to uncurve it when the hostess goes. No wheeled chair runs smoothly in with that beaming face in it; and ——'s little cotton pocket-handkerchief helped to make (I believe) this very sheet of paper. A half-sad, half-ludicrous story of Rogers is all I will sully it with. You know, I daresay, that for a year or so before his death, he wandered, and lost himself like one of the Children in the Wood, grown up there and grown down again. He had Mrs. Procter and Mrs. Carlyle to breakfast with him one morning—only those two. Both excessively talkative, very quick and clever, and bent on entertaining him. When Mrs. Carlyle had flashed and shone before him for about three-quarters of an hour on one subject, he turned his poor old eyes on Mrs. Procter, and pointing to the brilliant discourser with his poor old finger, said (indignantly), 'Who is *she*?' Upon this, Mrs. Procter, cutting in, delivered (it is her own story) a neat oration on the life and writings of Carlyle, and enlightened him in her happiest and airiest manner; all of which he heard, staring in the dreariest silence, and then said

<sup>1</sup> Written at Boulogne, on paper with London address printed on it.

(indignantly, as before), 'And who are *you?*'—Ever, my  
 dear Irving, Most affectionately and truly yours.

VILLA DES MOULINEAUX, BOULOGNE,  
*Saturday Evening, Fifth July, 1856.*

MY DEAR LANDOR,—I write to you so often in  
 my books, and my writing of letters is usually so  
 confined to the numbers that I *must* write, and in  
 which I have no kind of satisfaction, that I am afraid to  
 think how long it is since we exchanged a direct letter. But  
 talking to your namesake this very day at dinner, it sud-  
 denly entered my head that I would come into my room here  
 as soon as dinner should be over, and write, 'My dear Lan-  
 dor; how are you?' for the pleasure of having the answer  
 under your own hand. That you *do* write, and that pretty  
 often, I know beforehand. Else why do I read the *Exam-*  
*iner?*

Mr. Walter  
 Savage  
 Landor.

We were in Paris from October to May (I perpetually  
 flying between that city and London), and there we found  
 out, by a blessed accident, that your godson was horribly  
 deaf. I immediately consulted the principal physician of  
 the Deaf and Dumb Institution there (one of the best aurists  
 in Europe), and he kept the boy for three months, and took  
 unheard-of pains with him. He is now quite recovered, has  
 done extremely well at school, has brought home a prize in  
 triumph, and will be eligible to 'go up' for his India exami-  
 nation soon after next Easter. Having a direct appoint-  
 ment, he will probably be sent out soon after he has passed,  
 and so will fall into that strange life 'up the country,' before  
 he well knows he is alive, which indeed seems to be rather an  
 advanced stage of knowledge.

And there in Paris, at the same time, I found Marguerite  
 Power and little Nelly, living with their mother and a pretty  
 sister, in a very small, neat apartment, and working (as  
 Marguerite told me) hard for a living. All that I saw of  
 them filled me with respect, and revived the tenderest re-  
 membrances of Gore House. They are coming to pass two  
 or three weeks here for a country rest, next month. We had  
 many long talks concerning Gore House, and all its bright



associations; and I can honestly report that they hold no one in more gentle and affectionate remembrance than you. Marguerite is still handsome, though she had the small-pox two or three years ago, and bears the traces of it here and there, by daylight. Poor little Nelly (the quicker and more observant of the two) shows some little tokens of a broken-off marriage in a face too careworn for her years, but is a very winning and sensible creature.

We are expecting Mary Boyle too, shortly.

I have just been propounding to Forster if it is not a wonderful testimony to the homely force of truth, that one of the most popular books on earth has nothing in it to make any one laugh or cry? Yet I think, with some confidence, that you never did either over any passage in *Robinson Crusoe*. In particular, I took Friday's death as one of the least tender and (in the true sense) least sentimental things ever written. It is a book I read very much; and the wonder of its prodigious effect on me and every one, and the admiration thereof, grows on me the more I observe this curious fact.

Kate and Georgina send you their kindest loves, and smile approvingly on me from the next room, as I bend over my desk. My dear Landor, you see many I daresay, and hear from many I have no doubt, who love you heartily; but we silent people in the distance never forget you. Do not forget us, and let us exchange affection at least.

Ever your Admirer and Friend.

VILLA DES MOULINEAUX, NEAR BOULOGNE,  
*Saturday Night, Fifth July, 1856.*

The Duke  
of Devon-  
shire.

MY DEAR DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE,—From this place where I am writing my way through the summer, in the midst of rosy gardens and sea airs, I cannot forbear writing to tell you with what uncommon pleasure I received your interesting letter, and how sensible I always am of your kindness and generosity. You were always in the mind of my household during your illness; and to have so beautiful, and fresh, and manly an assurance of

your recovery from it, under your own hand, is a privilege and delight that I will say no more of.

I am so glad you like Flora. It came into my head one day that we have all had our Floras, and that it was a half-serious, half-ridiculous truth which had never been told. It is a wonderful gratification to me find that everybody knows her. Indeed, some people seem to think I have done them a personal injury, and that their individual Floras (God knows where they are, or who!) are each and all Little Dorrit's!

We were all grievously disappointed that you were ill when we played Mr. Collins' *Lighthouse* at my house. If you had been well, I should have waited upon you with my humble petition that you would come and see it; and if you had come I think you would have cried, which would have charmed me. I hope to produce another play at home next Christmas, and if I can only persuade you to see it from a special arm-chair, and can only make you wretched, my satisfaction will be intense. May I tell you, to beguile a moment, of a little 'Tag,' or end of a piece, I saw in Paris this last winter, which struck me as the prettiest I had ever met with? The piece was not a new one, but a revival at the Vaudeville—*Les Mémoires du Diable*. Admirably constructed, very interesting, and extremely well played. The plot is, that a certain M. Robin has come into possession of the papers of a deceased lawyer, and finds some relating to the wrongful withholding of an estate from a certain baroness, and to certain other frauds (involving even the denial of the marriage to the deceased baron, and the tarnishing of his good name) which are so very wicked that he binds them up in a book and labels them *Mémoires du Diable*. Armed with this knowledge he goes down to the desolate old château in the country—part of the wrested-away estate—from which the baroness and her daughter are going to be ejected. He informs the mother that he can right her and restore the property, but must have, as his reward, her daughter's hand in marriage. She replies: 'I cannot promise my daughter to a man of whom I know nothing. The gain would be an unspeakable happiness, but I resolutely decline the bargain.' The daughter, however, has observed all, and she comes for-



ward and says: 'Do what you have promised my mother you can do, and I am yours.' Then the piece goes on to its development, in an admirable way, through the unmasking of all the hypocrites. Now, M. Robin, partly through his knowledge of the secret ways of the old château (derived from the lawyer's papers), and partly through his going to a masquerade as the devil—the better to explode what he knows on the hypocrites—is supposed by the servants at the château really to be the devil. At the opening of the last act he suddenly appears there before the young lady, and she screams, but, recovering and laughing, says, 'You are not really the ——?' 'Oh dear no!' he replies, 'have no connection with him. But these people down here are so frightened and absurd! See this little toy on the table; I open it; here's a little bell. They have a notion that whenever this bell rings I shall appear. Very ignorant, is it not?' 'Very, indeed,' says she. 'Well,' says M. Robin, 'if you should want me very much to appear, try the bell, if only for a jest. Will you promise?' Yes, she promises, and the play goes on. At last he has righted the baroness completely, and has only to hand her the last document, which proves her marriage and restores her good name. Then he says: 'Madame, in the progress of these endeavours I have learnt the happiness of doing good for its own sake. I made a necessary bargain with you: I release you from it. I have done what I undertook to do. I wish you and your amiable daughter all happiness. Adieu! I take my leave.' Bows himself out. People on the stage astonished. Audience astonished—incensed. The daughter is going to cry, when she looks at the box on the table, remembers the bell, runs to it and rings it, and he rushes back and takes her to his heart; upon which we all cry with pleasure, and then laugh heartily.

This looks dreadfully long, and perhaps you know it already. If so, I will endeavour to make amends with Flora in future numbers.

I saw Paxton <sup>1</sup> now and then when you were ill, and always received from him most encouraging accounts. I don't know how heavy he is going to be (I mean in the scale), but I

<sup>1</sup> Sir Joseph Paxton.

begin to think Daniel Lambert must have been in his family.  
 Ever your Grace's faithful and obliged.

VILLA DES MOULINEAUX, BOULOGNE, *Tuesday, Eighth July, 1856.*

MY DEAREST MACREADY,—I perfectly agree <sup>Mr. W. C. Macready.</sup> with you in your appreciation of Katie's poem, and shall be truly delighted to publish it in *Household Words*. It shall go into the very next number we make up. We are a little in advance (to enable Wills to get a holiday), but as I remember, the next number made up will be published in three weeks.

We are pained indeed to read your reference to my poor boy. God keep him and his father. I trust he is not conscious of much suffering himself. If that be so, it is, in the midst of the distress, a great comfort.

*Little Dorrit* keeps me pretty busy as you may suppose. The beginning of No. 10—the first line—now lies upon my desk. It would not be easy to increase upon the pains I take with her anyhow.

We are expecting Stanfield on Thursday, and Peter Cunningham and his wife on Monday. I would we were expecting you! This is as pretty and odd a little French country house as could be found anywhere; and the gardens are most beautiful.

In *Household Words*, next week, pray read 'The Diary of Anne Rodway' (in two not long parts). It is by Collins, and I think possesses great merit and real pathos.

Being in town the other day, I saw Gye by accident, and told him, when he praised——to me, that she was a very bad actress. 'Well!' said he, '*you* may say anything, but if anybody else had told me that I should have stared.' Nevertheless, I derived an impression from his manner that she had not been a profitable speculation in respect of money. That very same day Stanfield and I dined alone together at the Garrick, and drank your health. We had had a ride by the river before dinner (of course he *would* go and look at boats), and had been talking of you.

I know of nothing of public interest that is new in France,



## 504 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

except that I am changing my moustache into a beard.—  
Ever, my dearest Macready,

Most affectionately yours.

VILLA DES MOULINEAUX, BOULOGNE, *Wednesday, Ninth July, 1856.*

Mr. Frank  
Stone,  
A.R.A.

MY DEAR STONE,—I have got a capital part  
for you in the farce,<sup>1</sup> not a difficult one to learn,  
as you never say anything but 'Yes' and 'No.'  
You are called in the *dramatis personæ* an able-bodied British  
seaman, and you are never seen by mortal eye to do anything  
(except inopportunately producing a mop) but stand about the  
deck of the boat in everybody's way, with your hair im-  
mensely touzled, one brace on, your hands in your pockets,  
and the bottoms of your trousers tucked up. Yet you are  
inextricably connected with the plot, and are the man whom  
everybody is enquiring after. I think it is a very whimsical  
idea and extremely droll. It made me laugh heartily when I  
jotted it all down yesterday. Ever affectionately.

VILLA DES MOULINEAUX, BOULOGNE, *Sunday, Thirteenth July, 1856.*

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

MY DEAR COLLINS,—We are all sorry that you  
are not coming until the middle of next month,  
but we hope that you will then be able to remain,  
so that we may all come back together about the Tenth of  
October. I think (recreation allowed, etc.) that the play  
will take that time to write. The ladies of the *dram. pers.*  
are frightfully anxious to get it under way, and to see you  
locked up in the pavilion; apropos of which noble edifice I  
have omitted to mention that it is made a more secluded re-  
treat than it used to be, and is greatly improved by the posi-  
tion of the door being changed. It is as snug and as pleas-  
ant as possible; and the Genius of Order has made a few little  
improvements about the house (at the rate of about tenpence  
apiece), which the Genius of Disorder will, it is hoped, ap-  
preciate.

I cannot tell you what a high opinion I have of Anne  
Rodway. I took 'Extracts' out of the title because it con-

<sup>1</sup> The farce alluded to, however, was never written.

veyed to the many-headed an idea of incompleteness—of something unfinished—and is likely to stall some readers off. I read the first part at the office with strong admiration, and read the second on the railway coming back here, being in town just after you had started on your cruise. My behaviour before my fellow-passengers was weak in the extreme, for I cried as much as you could possibly desire. Apart from the genuine force and beauty of the little narrative, and the admirable personation of the girl's identity and point of view, it is done with an amount of honest pains and devotion to the work which few men have better reason to appreciate than I, and which no man can have a more profound respect for. I think it excellent, feel a personal pride and pleasure in it which is a delightful sensation, and know no one else who could have done it.

Of myself I have only to report that I have been hard at it with *Little Dorrit*. This last week I sketched out the notion, characters, and progress of the farce, and sent it off to Mark, who has been ill of an ague. It ought to be very funny. The cat business is too ludicrous to be treated of in so small a sheet of paper, so I must describe it *vivâ voce* when I come to town. French has been so insufferably conceited since he shot tigerish cat No. 1 (intent on the noble Dick, with green eyes three inches in advance of her head), that I am afraid I shall have to part with him. All the boys likewise (in new clothes and ready for church) are at this instant prone on their stomachs behind bushes, whooshing and crying (after tigerish cat No. 2): 'French! Here she comes!' 'There she goes!' etc. I dare not put my head out of window for fear of being shot (it is as like a *coup d'état* as possible), and tradesmen coming up the avenue cry plaintively: '*Ne tirez pas, Monsieur Fleench; c'est moi—boulanger. Ne tirez pas, mon ami.*'

Likewise I shall have to recount to you the secret history of a robbery at the Pavilion at Folkestone, which you will have to write.

Tell Piggot, when you see him, that we shall all be much pleased if he will come down at his own convenience while you are here, and stay a few days with us.



I shall have more than one notion of future work to suggest to you while we are beguiling the dreariness of an arctic winter in these parts. May they prosper!

Kind regards from all to the dramatic poet of the establishment, and to the D. P.'s mother and brother.

Ever yours.

PS.—If *The Flying Dutchman* should be done again, pray do go and see it. Webster expressed his opinion to me that it was 'a neat piece.' I implore you to go and see a neat piece.

BOULOGNE, Tuesday, Twenty-ninth July, 1856.

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

MY DEAR COLLINS,—I write you at once, in answer to yours received this morning, because there is a slight change in my London plans, necessitated by Townshend's intention of coming to the Pavilion here on the 5th or 6th, and hoping to have me pretty much at his disposal for a week or so.

Therefore, if Wills should purpose returning to London on Friday or on Saturday, I shall come up with him, and return here on the 4th or 5th of August. Will you hold yourself disengaged for next Sunday until you hear from me? I think I am very likely to be on the loose that day.

(Having done this morning, I am only waiting here for Wills, whom I don't like to despoil of his trip by going across now.)

On the 15th we shall, of course, delightedly expect you, and you will find your room in apple-pie order. I am charmed to hear you have discovered so good a notion for the play [*The Frozen Deep*]. Immense excitement is always in action here on the subject, and I don't think Mary and Katey will feel quite safe until you are shut up in the Pavilion on pen and ink.

I like that view of the picture controversy (what a World it is!) very much, and shall be glad and much assisted if you will tell me, *by return*, when you can have the copy ready, and about how long it will be. My reason is this: to facilitate poor Wills' getting a holiday. . . .

We are getting more than usual in advance, and if you can satisfy me on these points while I have Wills beside me, I can keep a No. open, and lead it off with that paper.

The château continues to be the best known, and the Cook is really special.

All send their kindest regard, and their welcome for the 15th on beforehand.

Ever faithfully.

BOULOGNE, *Thursday, Seventh August, 1856.*

MY DEAR WILLS,—I do not feel disposed to record those two Chancery cases; firstly, because I would rather have no part in engendering in the mind of any human creature, a hopeful confidence in that den of iniquity.

And secondly, because it seems to me that the real philosophy of the facts is altogether missed in the narrative. The wrong which chanced to be set right in these two cases was done, as all such wrong is, mainly because these wicked courts of equity, with all their means of evasion and postponement, give scoundrels confidence in cheating. If justice were cheap, sure, and speedy, few such things could be. It is because it has become (through the vile dealing of those courts and the vermin they have called into existence) a positive precept of experience that a man had better endure a great wrong than go, or suffer himself to be taken, into Chancery, with the dream of setting it right. It is because of this that such nefarious speculations are made.

Therefore I see nothing at all to the credit of Chancery in these cases, but everything to its discredit. And as to owing it to Chancery to bear testimony to its having rendered justice in two such plain matters, I have no debt of the kind upon my conscience.—In haste,

Ever faithfully.

BOULOGNE, *Friday, Eighth August, 1856.*

MY DEAREST MACREADY,—I like the second little poem very much indeed, and think (as you do) that it is a great advance upon the first. Please to note that I make it a rule to pay for everything that is inserted in *Household Words*, holding it to be a part of my trust to



make my fellow-proprietors understand that they have no right to unrequited labour. Therefore, when Wills (who has been ill and is gone for a holiday) does his invariable spiriting gently, don't make Katey's case different from Adelaide Procter's.

I am afraid there is no possibility of my reading Dorsetshirewards. I have made many conditional promises thus: 'I am very much occupied; but if I read at all, I will read for your institution in such an order on my list.' Edinburgh, which is No. 1, I have been obliged to put as far off as next Christmas twelvemonth. Bristol stands next. The working men at Preston come next. And so, if I were to go out of the record and read for your people, I should bring such a house about my ears as would shake *Little Dorrit* out of my head.

Being in town last Saturday, I went to see Robson in a burlesque of *Medea*. It is an odd but perfectly true testimony to the extraordinary power of his performance (which is of a very remarkable kind indeed), that it points the badness of ——'s acting in a most singular manner, by bringing out what she might do and does not. The scene with Jason is perfectly terrific; and the manner in which the comic rage and jealousy does not pitch itself over the floor at the stalls is in striking contrast to the manner in which the tragic rage and jealousy does. He has a frantic song and dagger dance, about ten minutes long altogether, which has more passion in it than —— could express in fifty years.—Ever, my dear Macready,  
Affectionately yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Twelfth September*, 1856.

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

MY DEAR COLLINS,—*An admirable idea.* It seems to me to supply and include everything the play wanted. But it is so very strong that I doubt whether the man can (without an anti-climax) be shown to be rescued and alive, until the last act. The struggle, the following him away, the great suspicion, and the suspended interest, in the second. The relief and joy of the discovery, in the third.

Here, again, Mark's part seems to me to be suggested.

An honest, bluff man, previously admiring and liking me—conceiving the terrible suspicion—watching its growth in his own mind—and gradually falling from me in the very generosity and manhood of his nature—would be engaging in itself, would be what he would do remarkably well; would give me capital things to do with him (and you know we go very well together), and would greatly strengthen the suspended interest aforesaid.

I throw this out with all deference, of course, to your internal view and preconception of the matter. Turn it how you will, the strength of the situation is *prodigious*; and if we don't bring the house down with it, I'm a—Tory (an illegible word which I mean for T-O-R-Y).

Hoping to see you to-night,

Ever cordially.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Saturday Night*,  
*Thirteenth September, 1856.*

MY DEAR COLLINS,—Another idea I have been waiting to impart. I daresay you have anticipated it. *Now*, Mrs. Wills' second sight is clear as to the illustration of it, and greatly helps that suspended interest. Thus: 'You ask *me* what I see of those lost Voyagers. I see the lamb in the grasp of the lion—your bonnie bird alone with the hawk. What do I see? I see you and all around you crying, Blood! The stain of his blood is upon you!' (C. D.)

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

Which would be right to a certain extent, and absolutely wrong as to the marrow of it.

Ever yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Sunday Morning*,  
*Twenty-eighth September, 1856.*

MY DEAR WILLS,—I suddenly remember this morning that in Mr. Curtis' article, 'Health and Education,' I left a line which must come out. It is in effect that the want of healthy training leaves girls in a fit state to be the subjects of mesmerism. I would not on any condition hurt Elliotson's feelings (as I should deeply) by leaving that depreciatory kind of reference in any page of *H. W.* He has suffered quite enough without a stab from a friend. So pray, whatever the inconvenience may be in what Brad-

Mr. W. H.  
Wills.



bury calls 'the Friars,' take that passage out. By some extraordinary accident, after observing it, I forgot to do it.

Ever faithfully.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Saturday, Fourth October, 1856.*

Miss  
Dickens.

MY DEAR MAMEY,—The preparations for the play are already beginning, and it is christened (this is a great dramatic secret, which I suppose you know already) *The Frozen Deep*.

Tell Katey, with my best love, that if she fail to come back six times as red, hungry, and strong as she was when she went away, I shall give her part to somebody else.

We shall all be very glad to see you both back again. When I say 'we' I include the birds (who send their respectful duty) and the Plorn.—Ever, my dear Mamey,

Your affectionate Father.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Tuesday, Seventh October, 1856.*

The Hon.  
Mrs.  
Watson.

MY DEAR MRS. WATSON,—I *did* write it for you; and I hoped, in writing it, that you would think so. All those remembrances are fresh in my mind, as they often are, and gave me an extraordinary interest in recalling the past. I should have been grievously disappointed if you had not been pleased, for I took aim at you with a most determined intention.

Let me congratulate you most heartily on your handsome Eddy having passed his examination with such credit. I am sure there is a spirit shining out of his eyes, which will do well in that manly and generous pursuit. You will naturally feel his departure very much, and so will he; but I have always observed within my experience, that the men who have left home young have, many long years afterwards, had the tenderest love for it, and for all associated with it. That's a pleasant thing to think of, as one of the wise and benevolent adjustments in these lives of ours.

I have been so hard at work (and shall be for the next eight or nine months), that sometimes I fancy I have a digestion, or a head, or nerves, or some odd encumbrance of that kind, to which I am altogether unaccustomed, and am

obliged to rush at some other object for relief; at present the house is in a state of tremendous excitement, on account of Mr. Collins having nearly finished the new play we are to act at Christmas, which is very interesting and extremely clever. I hope this time you will come and see it. We purpose producing it on Charley's birthday, Twelfth Night; but we shall probably play four nights altogether—*The Light-house* on the last occasion—so that if you could come for the last two nights, you would see both the pieces. I am going to try and do better than ever, and already the schoolroom is in the hands of carpenters; men from underground habitations in theatres, who look as if they lived entirely upon smoke and gas, meet me at unheard-of hours. Mr. Stanfield is perpetually measuring the boards with a chalked piece of string and an umbrella, and all the elder children are wildly punctual and businesslike to attract managerial commendation. If you don't come, I shall do something antagonistic—try to unwrite No. 11, I think. I should particularly like you to see a new and serious piece so done. Because I don't think you know, without seeing, how good it is!!!

None of the children suffered, thank God, from the Boulogne risk. The three little boys have gone back to school there, and are all well. Katey came away ill, but it turned out that she had the whooping-cough for the second time. She has been to Brighton, and comes home to-day. I hear great accounts of her, and I hope to find her quite well when she arrives presently. I am afraid Mary Boyle has been praising the Boulogne life too highly. Not that I deny, however, our having passed some very pleasant days together, and our having had great pleasure in her visit.

You will object to me dreadfully, I know, with a beard (though not a great one); but if you come and see the play, you will find it necessary there, and will perhaps be more tolerant of the fearful object afterwards. I need not tell you how delighted we should be to see George, if you would come together. Pray tell him so, with my kind regards. I like the notion of Wentworth and his philosophy of all things. I remember a philosophical gravity upon him, a state of suspended opinion as to myself, it struck me, when



we last met, in which I thought there was a great deal of oddity and character.

Charley is doing very well at Baring's, and attracting praise and reward to himself. Within this fortnight there turned up from the West Indies, where he is now a chief justice, an old friend of mine, of my own age, who lived with me in lodgings in the Adelphi, when I was just Charley's age. He had a great affection for me at that time, and always supposed I was to do some sort of wonders. It was a very pleasant meeting indeed, and he seemed to think it so odd that I shouldn't be Charley!

This is every atom of no-news that will come out of my head, and I firmly believe it is all I have in it—except that a cobbler at Boulogne, who had the nicest of little dogs, that always sat in his sunny window watching him at work, asked me if I would bring the dog home, as he couldn't afford to pay the tax for him. The cobbler and the dog being both my particular friends, I complied. The cobbler parted with the dog heart-broken. When the dog got home here, my man, like an idiot as he is, tied him up and then untied him. The moment the gate was open, the dog (on the very day after his arrival) ran out. Next day, Georgy and I saw him lying, all covered with mud, dead, outside the neighbouring church. How am I ever to tell the cobbler? He is too poor to come to England, so I feel that I must lie to him for life, and say that the dog is fat and happy. Mr. Plornish, much affected by this tragedy, said: 'I s'pose, pa, I shall meet the cobbler's dog' (in heaven).

Pray write to me again some day, and I can't be too busy to be happy in the sight of your familiar hand, associated in my mind with so much that I love and honour.—Ever, my dear Mrs. Watson,

Most faithfully yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Thursday, Ninth October, 1856.*

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

MY DEAR COLLINS,—I should like to show you some cuts I have made in the second act (subject to authorial sanction, of course). They are mostly verbal, and all bring the Play closer together.

Also, I should like to know whether it is likely that you

will want to alter anything in these first two acts. If not, here are Charley, Mark, and I, all ready to write, and we may get a fair copy out of hand. From said fair copy all my people will write out their own parts.

I dine at home to-day, but not to-morrow. On Saturday, and Sunday likewise, I dine at home. We must perpetually 'put ourselves in communication with the view of dealing with it'—as Wills says—the moment you have done. How do you get on? And will you come at six to-day—or when?

I am more sure than ever of the effect.

Ever faithfully.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Fifteenth October*, 1856.

MY DEAR COLLINS,—Will you read *Turning* <sup>The same.</sup>  
*the Tables* (in my old Prompt-book) enclosed,  
and let me know whether you dare to play Edgar de Courcy?  
There is very good business in it with Humphreys (Mark).  
My great difficulty is Patty Larkins.

Send me back the book when you answer.

Ever faithfully.

PPS.—Here is *Animal Magnetism* to read, too. Will you get another copy for yourself at some theatrical shop? We play it in two acts.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE, *October Twentieth*, 1856.

MY DEAR MRS. HORNE,—I answer your note by <sup>Mrs. Horne.</sup>  
return of post, in order that you may know that  
the Stereoscopic Nottage has not written to me yet. Of  
course I will not lose a moment in replying to him when he  
does address me.

We shall be greatly pleased to see you again. You have been very, very often in our thoughts and on our lips, during this long interval.

And 'she' is near you, is she? O I remember her well! And I am still of my old opinion! Passionately devoted to her sex as I am (they are the weakness of my existence), I still consider her a failure. She had some extraordinary



christian-name, which I forget. Lashed into verse by my feelings, I am inclined to write:

My heart disowns  
Ophelia Jones;

only I think it was a more sounding name.

Are these the tones—  
Volumnia Jones?

No. Again it seems doubtful.

God bless her bones,  
Petronia Jones.

I think not.

Carve I on stones  
Olympia Jones.

Can *that* be the name? Fond memory favours it more than any other. My love to her.—Ever, my dear Mrs. Horne,

Very faithfully yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Sunday Night, Twenty-sixth October, 1856.*

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

MY DEAR COLLINS,—Will you tell Pigott of the Rehearsal arrangements when that Ancient Mariner turns up?

Will you dine at our *H. W. [Household Words]* Audit dinner, on Tuesday, the 4th of November, at half-past five?

Will you come and see the ladies, in the rough, next Thursday at half-past seven?

Though mayhap you may come here before, for you will be glad to know that Stanfield arrived from Holyhead at Midnight last night, and sent a Dispatch down here the first thing this morning, proposing to fall to, to-morrow. I have appointed him to be here at from three to half-past to-morrow (Monday) afternoon to hear the Play; to dine at half-past five, and to go into the Theatre after dinner and settle his whole plans for the Carpenters. If you can come at the first of these times, or the second, or the third, it will be well. I have had an interview with the Authors, and printed them. I begin with the *Merry Berger* to-morrow night. I have

found a very good farce (with character parts for all) in lieu of *Turning the Tables*. On the whole, have not been idle. Ever faithfully.

Took twenty miles to-day, and got up all Richard's words [Richard Wardour], to the great terror of Finchley, Neasdon, Willesden, and the adjacent country.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Saturday Evening, First November, 1856.*

MY DEAR COLLINS,—Forster came here yesterday afternoon to ask me if he might read the Play, and I lent it to him. This afternoon I got the enclosed from him (which please to read at this point). You know that I don't agree with him as to the Nurse. . . . But I think his suggestion that the going away of the women might be suggested at the close of the First act as a preparation for the last an excellent one. Will you think of it? By an alteration that we could make in a quarter of an hour it might be done; and, moreover—this suggestion upon a suggestion arises in my mind—it might be made the Nurse's position in the Play that her blood-red Second Sight *is the first occasion of their going away at all*. (Forster does not clearly understand the circumstances of their going; but never mind that.)

His notion that Clara tells too much has been strong in my mind since I first got that act in Rehearsal. But, doubtful whether it might not unconsciously arise in me from a paternal interest in my own part, I had, as yet, said nothing about it—the rather as I had not yet seen the Second act on the stage.

Stanfield wants to cancel the chair altogether, and to substitute a piece of rock on the ground, composing with the Cavern. That, I take it, is clearly an improvement. He has a happy idea of painting the ship which is to take them back, ready for sailing, on the sea.

Nothing could induce [William] Telbin yesterday to explain what he was going to do before Stanfield; and nothing would induce Stanfield to explain what *he* was going to do before Telbin. But they had every inch and curve and line



in that bow accurately measured by the carpenters, and each requested to have a drawing of the whole made to scale. Then each said that he would make his model in card-board, and see what I 'thought of it.' I have no doubt the thing will be as well done as it can be.

Will you dine with us at five on Monday before Rehearsal? We can talk over Forster's points. If you are disengaged on Wednesday, shall we breathe some fresh air in dilution of Tuesday's 'alcohol,' and walk through the fallen leaves in Cobham Park? I can then explain how I think you can get your division of the Christmas No. [*Wreck of the 'Golden Mary'*] very originally and naturally. It came into my head to-day.

Ever faithfully.

PS.—I re-open this to say that I find from Wills that next Tuesday being the Audit Day at all is his mistake. It is Tuesday *week*. Therefore, if Tuesday is a fine day, shall we go out then?

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Friday, Fourteenth November, 1856.*

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

MY DEAR COLLINS,—I could not send you the books before I went out this morning for a twelve-miler, the collection being curiously spare in pick-up cases, and it being a work of time to find them.

Will you exchange proofs of the 'Captain' [first part of *The Wreck of the 'Golden Mary'*] with me? The proofs you have have markings of mine upon them which will be useful to me in correcting. You can bring me those when you come to-night.

Ever faithfully.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *First December, 1856.*

The Duke  
of Devon-  
shire.

MY DEAR DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE,—The moment the first bill is printed for the first night of the new play I told you of, I send it to you, in the hope that you will grace it with your presence. There is not one of the old actors whom you will fail to inspire as no one else can; and I hope you will see a little result of the friendly union of the arts, that you may think worth seeing, and that you can see nowhere else.

We propose repeating it on Thursday, the Eighth; Monday, the Twelfth; and Wednesday, the Fourteenth of January. I do not encumber this note with so many bills, and merely mention those nights in case any one of them should be more convenient to you than the first.

But I shall hope for the first, unless you dash me (N.B.—I put Flora into the current number on purpose that this might catch you softened towards me, and at a disadvantage). If there is hope of your coming, I will have the play clearly copied, and will send it to you to read beforehand. With the most grateful remembrances, and the sincerest good wishes for your health and happiness, I am ever, my dear Duke of Devonshire,

Your faithful and obliged.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Wednesday, Third December, 1856.*

MY DEAR MITTON,—The inspector from the fire office—surveyor, by the bye, they called him—Mr. Thomas Mitton. duly came. Wills described him as not very pleasant in his manners. I derived the impression that he was so exceedingly dry, that if *he* ever takes fire, he must burn out, and can never otherwise be extinguished.

Next day I received a letter from the secretary, to say that the said surveyor had reported great additional risk from fire, and that the directors, at their meeting next Tuesday, would settle the extra amount of premium to be paid.

Thereupon I thought the matter was becoming complicated, and wrote a common-sense note to the secretary (which I begged might be read to the directors), saying that I was quite prepared to pay any extra premium, but setting forth the plain state of the case. (I did not say that the Lord Chief Justice, the Chief Baron, and half the Bench were coming; though I felt a temptation to make a joke about burning them all.)

Finally, this morning comes up the secretary to me (yesterday having been the great Tuesday), and says that he is requested by the directors to present their compliments, and to say that they could not think of charging for any additional risk at all; feeling convinced that I would place the gas (which they considered to be the only danger) under the



charge of one competent man. I then explained to him how carefully and systematically that was all arranged, and we parted with drums beating and colours flying on both sides.

Ever faithfully.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Saturday Evening, Thirteenth December, 1856.*

Mr. W. C. MY DEAREST MACREADY,—We shall be charmed  
Macready. to squeeze Willie's friend in, and it shall be done by some undiscovered power of compression on the second night, Thursday, the fourteenth. Will you make our compliments to his honour, the Deputy Fiscal, present him with the enclosed bill, and tell him we shall be cordially glad to see him? I hope to entrust him with a special shake of the hand, to be forwarded to our dear boy (if a hoary sage like myself may venture on that expression) by the next mail.

I would have proposed the first night, but that is too full. You may faintly imagine, my venerable friend, the occupation of these also gray hairs, between *Golden Marys*, *Little Dorrits*, *Household Wordses*, four stage-carpenters entirely boarding on the premises, a carpenter's shop erected in the back garden, size always boiling over on all the lower fires, Stanfield perpetually elevated on planks and splashing himself from head to foot, Telbin requiring impossibilities of smart gasmen, and a legion of prowling nondescripts, for ever shrinking in and out. Calm amidst the wreck, your aged friend glides away on the *Dorrit* stream, forgetting the uproar for a stretch of hours, refreshing himself with a ten or twelve miles' walk, pitches headforemost into foaming rehearsals, placidly emerges for editorial purposes, smokes over buckets of distemper with Mr. Stanfield aforesaid, again calmly floats upon the *Dorrit* waters.—Ever, my dear Macready,

Most affectionately yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Fifteenth December, 1856.*

Miss Power. MY DEAR MARGUERITE,—I am not *quite* clear about the story; not because it is otherwise than exceedingly pretty, but because I am rather in a difficult position as to stories just now. Besides beginning a long one by Collins with the new year (which will last five or six

months), I have, as I always have at this time, a considerable residue of stories written for the Christmas number, not suitable to it, and yet available for the general purposes of *Household Words*. This limits my choice for the moment to stories that have some decided specialties (or a great deal of story) in them.

But I will look over the accumulation before you come, and I hope you will never see your little friend again but in print.

You will find us expecting you on the night of the twenty-fourth, and heartily glad to welcome you. The most terrific preparations are in hand for the play on Twelfth Night. There has been a painter's shop in the school-room; a gas-fitter's shop all over the basement; a dressmaker's shop at the top of the house; a tailor's shop in my dressing-room. Stanfield has been incessantly on scaffoldings for two months; and your friend has been writing *Little Dorrit*, etc. etc., in corners, like the sultan's groom, who was turned upside-down by the genie.

Kindest love, from all, and from me.

Ever affectionately.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Tuesday Evening, Sixteenth December, 1856.*

MY DEAR COLLINS,—I send round to ascertain that you are all right. Not that I have any mis-  
giving on the subject, for when I shook hands  
with you last night you were as cool and comfortable as an  
unlucky Dog could be.

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

All progressing satisfactorily. Telbin painting on the Stage. Carpenters knocking down the Drawing-room.

We are obliged to do *Animal Magnetism* on Thursday evening at eight. If you are strong enough to come, I know you will; if you are not, I know you won't.

Ever cordially.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Christmas Eve, 1856.*

MY DEAR SIR,—I cannot leave your letter unanswered, because I am really anxious that you  
should understand why I cannot comply with  
your request.

Mr.  
William  
Charles  
Kent.



Scarcely a week passes without my receiving requests from various quarters to sit for likenesses, to be taken by all the processes ever invented. Apart from my having an invincible objection to the multiplication of my countenance in the shop-windows, I have not, between my avocations and my needful recreation, the time to comply with these proposals. At this moment there are three cases out of a vast number, in which I have said: 'If I sit at all, it shall be to you first, to you second, and to you third.' But I assure you, I consider myself almost as unlikely to go through these three conditional achievements as I am to go to China. Judge when I am likely to get to Mr. Watkins!

I highly esteem and thank you for your sympathy with my writings. I doubt if I have a more genial reader in the world.

Very faithfully yours.

1857

#### NARRATIVE

THIS was a very full year in many ways. In February, Charles Dickens obtained possession of Gad's Hill, and was able to turn workmen into it. In April he stayed, with his wife and sister-in-law, for a week or two at Wate's Hotel, Gravesend, to be at hand to superintend the beginning of his alterations of the house, and from thence we give a letter to Lord Carlisle. He removed his family to Gad's Hill, for a summer residence, in June; and he finished *Little Dorrit* there early in the summer. One of his first visitors at Gad's Hill was the famous writer, Hans Christian Andersen. In January *The Frozen Deep* had been played at the Tavistock House theatre with such success, that it was necessary to repeat it several times and the theatre was finally demolished at the end of that month. In June Charles Dickens heard, with great grief, of the death of his dear friend Douglas Jerrold; and as a testimony of admiration for his genius and affectionate regard for himself, it was decided to organize, under the management of Charles Dickens, a series of entertainments, 'in memory of the late Douglas Jerrold,' the fund pro-

duced by them (a considerable sum) to be presented to Mr. Jerrold's family. The amateur company, including many of Mr. Jerrold's colleagues on *Punch*, gave subscription performances of *The Frozen Deep*; the Gallery of Illustration, in Regent Street, being engaged for the purpose. Charles Dickens gave two readings at St. Martins Hall of *The Christmas Carol* (to such immense audiences and with such success, that the idea of giving public readings for his *own* benefit first occurred to him). The professional actors, among them the famous veteran actor, Mr. T. P. Cooke, gave a performance of Mr. Jerrold's plays of *The Rent Day* and *Black-eyed Susan*, in which Mr. T. P. Cooke sustained the character which he had originally 'made' when the latter play was first produced. A lecture was given by Mr. Thackeray, and another by Mr. W. H. Russell. Finally, the Queen having expressed a desire to see *The Frozen Deep*, which had been much talked of during that season, there was another performance before her Majesty and the Prince Consort at the Gallery of Illustration in July, and at the end of that month Charles Dickens read his *Carol* in the Free Trade Hall, at Manchester. And to wind up the 'Memorial Fund' entertainments, *The Frozen Deep* was played again at Manchester, also in the great Free Trade Hall, at the end of August. For the business of these entertainments he secured the assistance of Mr. Arthur Smith, of whom he writes to Mr. Forster, at this time: 'I have got hold of Arthur Smith, as the best man of business I know, and go to work with him to-morrow morning.' And when he began his own public readings, both in town and country, he felt himself most fortunate in having the co-operation of this invaluable man of business, and also of his zealous friendship and pleasant companionship.

In July, his second son, Walter Landor, went to India as a cadet in the 'Company's service,' from which he was afterwards transferred to the 42nd Royal Highlanders. His father and his elder brother went to Southampton to see him off. From this place Charles Dickens wrote to Mr. Edmund Yates, a young man in whom he had been interested from his boyhood, both for the sake of Mr. Yates' parents and for his



own sake, and for whom he had always an affectionate regard.

In September Charles Dickens made a short tour in the North of England, with Mr. Wilkie Collins, out of which arose *The Lazy Tour of Two Idle Apprentices*, written by them jointly, and published in *Household Words*. Some letters to Miss Hogarth during this expedition are given here, parts of which (as is the case with many letters to his eldest daughter and his sister-in-law) have been published in Mr. Forster's book.

The letters which follow are almost all on the various subjects mentioned in our Narrative, and need little explanation.

His letter to Mr. Procter makes allusion to a legacy lately left to that friend.

The letters to Mr. Dilke, the original and much-respected proprietor of the *Athenæum*, and to Mr. Forster, on the subject of the 'Literary Fund,' refer, as the letters indicate, to a battle which they were carrying on together with that institution.

A letter to Mr. Frank Stone is an instance of his kind, patient, and judicious criticism of a young writer, and the letter which follows it shows how thoroughly it was understood and how perfectly appreciated by the authoress of the 'Notes' referred to. Another instance of the same kind criticism is given in a second letter this year to Mr. Edmund Yates.

At the end of this Narrative we give a prologue to the play of *The Frozen Deep*. It was spoken at Tavistock House by Mr. John Forster; and at the public performances of the play, by Charles Dickens.

#### PROLOGUE

(*Curtain rises. Mists and darkness. Soft music throughout.*)

One savage footprint on the lonely shore,  
Where one man listen'd to the surge's roar;  
Not all the winds that stir the mighty sea  
Can ever ruffle in the memory.  
If such its interest and thrall, O then

Pause on the footprints of heroic men,  
 Making a garden of the desert wide  
 Where PARRY conquer'd death and FRANKLIN died:

To that white region where the Lost lie low,  
 Wrapp'd in their mantles of eternal snow;  
 Unvisited by change, nothing to mock  
 Those statues sculptured in the icy rock,  
 We pray your company; that hearts as true  
 (Though nothings of the air) may live for you;  
 Nor only yet that on our little glass  
 A faint reflection of those wilds may pass,  
 But, that the secrets of the vast Profound  
 Within us, an exploring hand may sound,  
 Testing the region of the ice-bound soul,  
 Seeking the passage at its northern pole,  
 Soft'ning the horrors of its wintry sleep,  
 Melting the surface of that 'Frozen Deep.'

Vanish, ye mists! But ere this gloom departs,  
 And to the union of three sister arts  
 We give a winter evening, good to know  
 That in the charms of such another show,  
 That in the fiction of a friendly play,  
 The Arctic sailors, too, put gloom away,  
 Forgot their long night, saw no starry dome,  
 Hail'd the warm sun, and were again at Home.

Vanish, ye mists! Not yet do we repair  
 To the still country of the piercing air;  
 But seek, before we cross the troubled seas,  
 An English hearth and Devon's waving trees.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Second January*, 1857.

MY DEAR PROCTER,—I have to thank you for <sup>Mr. B. W.</sup> a delightful book which has given me unusual <sup>Procter.</sup> pleasure. My delight in it has been a little dashed by certain farewell verses, but I have made up my mind (and you have no idea of the obstinacy of my character) not to believe them.

Perhaps it is not taking a liberty—perhaps it is—to con-



gratulate you on Kenyon's remembrance. Either way I can't help doing it with all my heart, for I know no man in the world (myself excepted) to whom I would rather the money went.

Affectionately yours ever.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Ninth January, 1857.*

Sir James  
Emerson  
Tennent.

MY DEAR TENNENT,—I must thank you for your earnest and affectionate letter. It has given me the greatest pleasure, mixing the play in my mind confusedly and delightfully with Pisa, the Valetta, Naples, Herculaneum—God knows what not.

As to the play itself; when it is made as good as my care can make it, I derive a strange feeling out of it, like writing a book in company; a satisfaction of a most singular kind, which has no exact parallel in my life; a something that I suppose to belong to a labourer in art alone, and which has to me a conviction of its being actual truth without its pain that I never could adequately state if I were to try never so hard.

You touch so kindly and feelingly on the pleasure such little pains give, that I feel quite sorry you have never seen this drama in progress during the last ten weeks here. Every Monday and Friday evening during that time we have been at work upon it. I assure you it has been a remarkable lesson to my young people in patience, perseverance, punctuality, and order; and, best of all, in that kind of humility which is got from the earnest knowledge that whatever the right hand finds to do must be done with the heart in it, and in a desperate earnest.

When I changed my dress last night (though I did it very quickly), I was vexed to find you gone. I wanted to have secured you for our green-room supper, which was very pleasant. If by any accident you should be free next Wednesday night (our last), pray come to that green-room supper. It would give me cordial pleasure to have you there.

—Ever, my dear Tennent,

Very heartily yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Saturday, Tenth January, 1857.*

MY DEAR COLLINS,—On second thoughts I am afraid of wasting the spirits of the company by calling the Dance at six on Monday. Therefore I abandon that intention. I hope we may get it right by speaking to one another in the Dressing-room.

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

On Play Days (only two more—how they fly!) Mark and I dine at three, off steak and stout, at the Cock, in Fleet Street. If you should be disposed to join us, then and there you'll find us.

Ever cordially.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Monday Night, Seventeenth January, 1857.*

MY DEAR CERJAT,—So wonderfully do good (epistolary) intentions become confounded with bad execution, that I assure you I laboured under a perfect and most comfortable conviction that I had answered your Christmas Eve letter of 1855. More than that, in spite of your assertions to the contrary, I still strenuously believe that I did so! I have more than half a mind (*Little Dorrit* and my other occupations notwithstanding) to charge you with having forgotten my reply!! I have even a wild idea that Townshend reproached me, when the last old year was new, with writing to you instead of to him!!! We will argue it out, as well as we can argue anything without poor dear Haldimand, when I come back to Elysée. In any case, however, don't discontinue your annual letter, because it has become an expected and a delightful part of the season to me.

M. De  
Cerjat.

With one of the prettiest houses in London, and every conceivable (and inconceivable) luxury in it, Townshend is voluntarily undergoing his own sentence of transportation in Nervi, a beastly little place near Genoa, where you would as soon find a herd of wild elephants in any villa as comfort. He has a notion that he *must* be out of England in the winter, but I believe him to be altogether wrong (as I have just told him in a letter), unless he could just take his society with him.

Workmen are now battering and smashing down my theatre here, where we have just been acting a new play of great merit, done in what I may call (modestly speaking of the getting-up, and not of the acting) an unprecedented way.



I believe that anything so complete has never been seen. We had an act at the North Pole, where the slightest and greatest thing the eye beheld were equally taken from the books of the Polar voyagers. Out of thirty people, there were certainly not two who might not have gone straight to the North Pole itself, completely furnished for the winter! And now it is a mere chaos of scaffolding, ladders, beams, canvases, paint-pots, sawdust, artificial snow, gas-pipes, and ghastliness. I have taken such pains with it for these ten weeks in all my leisure hours, that I feel now shipwrecked—as if I had never been without a play on my hands before. A third topic comes up as this ceases.

Down at Gad's Hill, near Rochester, in Kent—Shakespeare's Gad's Hill, where Falstaff engaged in the robbery—is a quaint little country-house of Queen Anne's time. I happened to be walking past, a year and a half or so ago, with my sub-editor of *Household Words*, when I said to him: 'You see that house? It has always a curious interest for me, because when I was a small boy down in these parts I thought it the most beautiful house (I suppose because of its famous old cedar-trees) ever seen. And my poor father used to bring me to look at it, and used to say that if I ever grew up to be a clever man perhaps I might own that house, or such another house. In remembrance of which, I have always in passing looked to see if it was to be sold or let, and it has never been to me like any other house, and it has never changed at all.' We came back to town, and my friend went out to dinner. Next morning he came to me in great excitement, and said: 'It is written that you were to have that house at Gad's Hill. The lady I had allotted to me to take down to dinner yesterday began to speak of that neighbourhood. "You know it?" I said; "I have been there to-day." "O yes," said she, "I know it very well. I was a child there, in the house they call Gad's Hill Place. My father was the rector, and lived there many years. He has just died, has left it to me, and I want to sell it." "So," says the sub-editor, "you must buy it. Now or never!" I did, and hope to pass next summer there, though I may, perhaps, let it afterwards, furnished, from time to time.

All about myself I find, and the little sheet nearly full! But I know, my dear Cerjat, the subject will have its interest for you, so I give it its swing. Mrs. Watson was to have been at the play, but most unfortunately had three children sick of gastric fever, and could not leave them. She was here some three weeks before, looking extremely well in the face, but rather thin. I hope you detected a remembrance of our happy visit to the Great St. Bernard in a certain number of *Little Dorrit*? Tell Mrs. Cerjat, with my love, that the opinions I have expressed to her on the subject of cows have become matured in my mind by experience and venerable age; and that I denounce the race as humbugs, who have been getting into poetry and all sorts of places without the smallest reason. Haldimand's housekeeper is an awful woman to consider. Pray give him our kindest regards and remembrances, if you ever find him in a mood to take it. We often, often talk of our old days at Lausanne.—Adieu, my dear fellow.

Ever cordially yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Monday, Nineteenth January, 1857.*

MY DEAR COLLINS,—Will you come and dine here next Sunday at five?

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

There is no one coming but a poor little Scotchman, domiciled in America—a musical composer and singer—who brought me a letter yesterday from New York, and quite moved me by his simple tale of loneliness. He is —, softened by trouble, with all the starch out of his collar, and all the money out of his Bank.

O reaction, reaction!

Ever faithfully.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Twenty-eighth January, 1857.*

MY DEAREST MACREADY,—Your friend and servant is as calm as Pecksniff, saving for his knitted brows now turning into cordage over *Little Dorrit*. The theatre has disappeared, the house is restored to its usual conditions of order, the family are tranquil and domestic, dove-eyed peace is enthroned in this study, fire-eyed radicalism in its master's breast.

Mr. W. C.  
Macready.

I am glad to hear that our poetess is at work again, and



shall be very much pleased to have some more contributions from her.

We dined yesterday at Frederick Pollock's. I begged an amazing photograph of you, and brought it away. It strikes me as one of the most ludicrous things I ever saw in my life. I think of taking a public-house, and having it copied larger, for the size. You may remember it? Very square and big—the Saracen's Head with its hair cut, and in modern gear? Staring very hard? As your particular friend, I would not part with it on any consideration. I will never get such a wooden head again.

Ever affectionately.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Wednesday, Twenty-eighth January, 1857.*

Sir Edward  
Bulwer  
Lytton.

MY DEAR BULWER,—I thought Wills had told you as to the Guild (for I begged him to) that he can do absolutely nothing until our charter is seven years old. It is the stringent and express prohibition of the Act of Parliament—for which things you members, thank God, are responsible and not I. When I observed this clause (which was just as we were going to grant a pension, if we could agree on a good subject), I caused our Counsel's opinion to be taken on it, and there is not a doubt about it. I immediately recommended that there should be no expenses—that the interest on the capital should be all invested as it accrued—that the chambers should be given up and the clerk discharged—and that the Guild should have the use of the *Household Words* office rent free, and the services of Wills on the same terms. All of which was done.

A letter is now copying, to be sent round to all the members, explaining, with the New Year, the whole state of the thing. You will receive this. It appears to me that it looks wholesome enough. But if a strong idiot comes and binds your hands, or mine, or both, for seven years, what is to be done against him?

As to greater matters than this, however—as to all matters on this teeming Earth—it appears to me that the House of Commons and Parliament altogether, is just the dreariest

failure and nuisance that has bothered this much-bothered world.  
Ever yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Seventh February*, 1857.

MY DEAR MARY,—Half a dozen words on this, <sup>Miss Mary Boyle.</sup>  
my birthday, to thank you for your kind and welcome remembrance, and to assure you that your Joseph is proud of it.

For about ten minutes after his death, on each occasion of that event occurring, Richard Wardour was in a floored condition. And one night, to the great terror of Devonshire, the Arctic Regions, and Newfoundland (all of which localities were afraid to speak to him, as his ghost sat by the kitchen fire in its rags), he very nearly did what he never did—went and fainted off, dead, again. But he always plucked up, on the turn of ten minutes, and became facetious.

Likewise he chipped great pieces out of all his limbs (solely, as I imagine, from moral earnestness and concussion of passion, for I never knew him to hit himself in any way) and terrified Aldersley<sup>1</sup> to that degree, by lunging at him to carry him into the cave, that the said Aldersley always shook like a mould of jelly, and muttered, ‘This is an awful thing!’  
Ever affectionately.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Sunday, Eighth February*, 1857.

MY DEAR WHITE,—Your note about the *Golden Mary* gave me great pleasure; though I don’t be- <sup>Rev. James White</sup>  
lieve in one part of it; for I honestly believe that your story, as really belonging to the rest of the narrative, had been generally separated from the other stories, and greatly liked. I had not that particular shipwreck that you mention in my mind (indeed I doubt if I know it), and John Steadiman merely came into my head as a staunch sort of name that suited the character. The number has done *Household Words* great service, and has decidedly told upon its circulation.

You should have come to the play. I much doubt if any-

<sup>1</sup> The part played in *The Frozen Deep* by its author, Mr. Wilkie Collins.



thing so complete will ever be seen again; the result was most remarkable even to me.

When are you going to send something more to *H. W.*?  
Are you lazy?? Low-spirited??? Pining for Paris????  
Ever affectionately.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Fourteenth February*, 1857.

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

MY DEAR COLLINS,—Will you come and dine at the office on Thursday at half-past five? We will then discuss the Brighton or other trip possibilities. I am tugging at my Oar too—should like a change—find the Galley a little heavy—must stick to it—am generally in a collinsion state.  
Ever faithfully.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Wednesday, Fourth March*, 1857.

The same.

MY DEAR COLLINS,—*I cannot tell you* what pleasure I had in the receipt of your letter yesterday evening, or how much good it did me in the depression consequent upon an exciting and exhausting day's work. I immediately arose (like the desponding Princes in the *Arabian Nights*, when the old woman—Procuress evidently, and probably of French extraction—comes to whisper about the Princesses they love) and washed my face and went out; and my face has been shining ever since.

Ellis [proprietor of the Bedford Hotel at Brighton] responds to my letter that rooms shall be ready! There is a train at twelve which appears to me to be the train for the distinguished visitors. If you will call for me in a cab at about twenty minutes past eleven, my hand will be on the latch of the door.

I have got a book to take down with me of which I have not read a line, but which I have been saving up to get a pull at it in the nature of a draught—*The Dead Secret*—by a Fellow Student.

Plornish has broken ground with a Joke which I consider equal to Sydney Smith.  
Ever faithfully.

OFFICE OF 'HOUSEHOLD WORDS,'  
 Thursday, Nineteenth March, 1857.

MY DEAR MR. DILKE,—Forster has another no-  
 tion about the Literary Fund. Will you name a  
 day next week—that day being neither Thursday nor Satur-  
 day—when we shall hold solemn council there at half-past  
 four?

Mr. W. C.  
 Dilke.

For myself, I beg to report that I have my war-paint on,  
 that I have buried the pipe of peace, and am whooping for  
 committee scalps. Ever faithfully yours.

GRAVESEND, KENT, Tenth April, 1857.

DEAR MADAM,—As I am away from London  
 for a few days, your letter has been forwarded  
 to me.

Miss Emily  
 Jolly.

I can honestly encourage and assure you that I believe  
 the depression and want of confidence under which you de-  
 scribe yourself as labouring to have no sufficient foundation.

First as to *Mr. Arle*. I have constantly heard it spoken  
 of with great approval, and I think it a book of considerable  
 merit. If I were to tell you that I see no evidence of inex-  
 perience in it, that would not be true. I think a little more  
 stir and action to be desired also; but I am surprised at your  
 being despondent about it, for I assure you that I had sup-  
 posed it (always remembering that it is your first novel) to  
 have met with a very good reception.

I can bring to my memory—here, with no means of refer-  
 ence at hand—only two papers of yours that have been un-  
 successful at *Household Words*. I think the first was called  
 'The Brook.' It appeared to me to break down upon a con-  
 fusion that pervaded it, between a Coroner's Inquest and a  
 Trial. I have a general recollection of the mingling of the  
 two, as to facts and forms that should have been kept apart,  
 in some inextricable manner that was beyond my powers of  
 disentanglement. The second was about a wife's writing a  
 Novel and keeping the secret from her husband until it was  
 done. I did not think the incident of sufficient force to jus-  
 tify the length of the narrative. But there is nothing fatal  
 in either of these mischances.



Mr. Wills told me, when I spoke to him of the latter paper, that you had it in contemplation to offer a longer story to *Household Words*. If you should do so, I assure you I shall be happy to read it myself, and that I shall have a sincere desire to accept it, if possible.

I can give you no better counsel than to look into the life about you, and to strive for what is noblest and true. As to further encouragement, I do not, I can most strongly add, believe that you have any reason to be downhearted.

Very faithfully yours.

GRAVESEND, KENT, *Wednesday, Fifteenth April, 1857.*

The Earl  
of Carlisle.

MY DEAR LORD CARLISLE,—I am writing by the river-side for a few days, and at the end of last week —— appeared here with your note of introduction. I was not in the way; but as —— had come express from London with it, Mrs. Dickens opened it, and gave her (in the limited sense which was of no use to her) an audience. She did not quite seem to know what she wanted of me. But she said she had understood at Stafford House that I had a theatre in which she could read; with a good deal of modesty and diffidence she at last got so far. Now, my little theatre turns my house out of window, costs fifty pounds to put up, and is only two months taken down; therefore, is quite out of the question. This Mrs. Dickens explained, and also my profound inability to do anything for ——'s readings which they could not do for themselves. She appeared fully to understand the explanation, and indeed to have anticipated for herself how powerless I must be in such a case.

She described herself as being consumptive, and as being subject to an effusion of blood from the lungs; about the last condition, one would think, poor woman, for the exercise of public elocution as an art.

Between ourselves, I think the whole idea a mistake, and have thought so from its first announcement. It has a fatal appearance of trading upon Uncle Tom, and am I not a man and a brother? which you may be by all means, and still not have the smallest claim to my attention as a public reader. The town is over-read from all the white squares on the

draught-board; it has been considerably harried from all the black squares—now with the aid of old banjoes, and now with the aid of Exeter Hall; and I have a very strong impression that it is by no means to be laid hold of from this point of address. I myself, for example, am the meekest of men, and in abhorrence of slavery yield to no human creature, and yet I don't admit the sequence that I want Uncle Tom (or Aunt Tomasina) to expound *King Lear* to me. And I believe my case to be the case of thousands.

I trouble you with this much about it, because I am naturally desirous you should understand that if I could possibly have been of any service, or have suggested anything to this poor lady, I would not have lost the opportunity. But I cannot help her, and I assure you that I cannot honestly encourage her to hope. I fear her enterprise has no hope in it.

In your absence I have always followed you through the papers, and felt a personal interest and pleasure in the public affection in which you are held over there.<sup>1</sup> At the same time I must confess that I should prefer to have you here, where good public men seem to me to be dismally wanted. I have no sympathy with demagogues, but am a grievous Radical, and think the political signs of the times to be just about as bad as the spirit of the people will admit of their being. In all other respects I am as healthy, sound, and happy as your kindness can wish. So you will set down my political despondency as my only disease.—I am, dear Lord Carlisle,  
Yours very faithfully and obliged.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Monday Evening, Eleventh May, 1857.*

MY DEAR COLLINS,—I am very sorry that we shall not have you to-morrow. Think you would get on better if you were to come after all.

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

Yes, sir; thank God, I *have* finished! [*Little Dorrit.*] On Sunday last I wrote the two little words of three letters each.

Any mad proposal you please will find a wildly insane response in  
Yours ever.

<sup>1</sup> The Earl of Carlisle was at this time Viceroy of Ireland.



We shall have to arrange about Tuesday at Gad's Hill. You remember the engagement?

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Thirteenth May, 1857.*

Mr. John  
Forster.

MY DEAR FORSTER,—I have gone over Dilke's memoranda, and I think it quite right and necessary that those points should be stated. Nor do I see the least difficulty in the way of their introduction into the pamphlet. But I do not deem it possible to get the pamphlet written and published before the dinner. I have so many matters pressing on my attention, that I cannot turn to it immediately on my release from my book just finished. It shall be done and distributed early next month.

As to anything being lost by its not being in the hands of the people who dine (as you seem to think), I have not the least misgiving on that score. They would say, if it were issued, just what they will say without it.

Lord Granville is committed to taking the chair, and will make the best speech he can in it. The pious B—— will cram him with as many distortions of the truth as his stomach may be strong enough to receive. R. B——, with Bardolphian eloquence, will cool his nose in the modest merits of the institution. T—— will make a neat and appropriate speech on both sides, round the corner and over the way. And all this would be done exactly to the same purpose and in just the same strain, if twenty thousand copies of the pamphlet had been circulated.                      Ever affectionately.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Friday, Twenty-second May, 1857.*

Rev. James  
White.

MY DEAR WHITE,—My emancipation having been effected on Saturday, the ninth of this month, I take some shame to myself for not having sooner answered your note. But the host of things to be done as soon as I was free, and the tremendous number of ingenuities to be wrought out at Gad's Hill, have kept me in a whirl of their own ever since.

We purpose going to Gad's Hill for the summer on the First of June; as, apart from the master's eye being a necessary ornament to the spot, I clearly see that the workmen

yet lingering in the yard must be squeezed out by bodily pressure, or they will never go. How will this suit you and yours? If you will come down, we can take you all in, on your way north; that is to say, we shall have that ample verge and room enough, until about the eighth; when Hans Christian Andersen (who has been 'coming' for about three years) will come for a fortnight's stay in England. I shall like you to see the little old-fashioned place. It strikes me as being comfortable.

Believe me, ever affectionately yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Friday Evening, Twenty-second May, 1857.*

MY DEAR COLLINS,—Hooray!!!

From our lofty heights let us look down on the toiling masses with mild complacency—with gentle pity—with dove-eyed benignity.

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

To-morrow I am bound to Forster; on Sunday to solemn Chief Justice's in remote fastnesses beyond Norwood; on Monday to Geographical Societies dining to cheer on Lady Franklin's Expedition; on Tuesday to Procter's; on Wednesday, sir—on Wednesday—if the mind can devise anything sufficiently in the style of sybarite Rome in the days of its culminating voluptuousness, I am your man.

Shall we appoint to meet at the *Household Words* office at half-past five? I have an appointment with Russell [W. H.] at three that afternoon, which *may*, but which I don't think will, detain me a few minutes after my time. In that unlikely case, will you wait for me at the office?

If you can think of any tremendous way of passing the night, in the meantime, do. I don't care what it is. I give (for that night only) restraint to the Winds!

I am very much excited by what you tell me of Mr. F.'s Aunt.<sup>1</sup> I already look upon her as mine. Will you bring her with you?

Wills tells me that he thinks the principles of story-writing are scarcely understood in this age and Empire.

Ever faithfully.

<sup>1</sup> A picture of that character in *Little Dorrit*, by an artist named Gale, bought by Charles Dickens through Collins.



TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Saturday Morning, Thirtieth May, 1857.*

Miss Emily  
Jolly.

DEAR MADAM,—I read your story, with all possible attention, last night. I cannot tell you with what reluctance I write to you respecting it, for my opinion of it is not favourable, although I perceive your heart in it, and great strength.

Pray understand that I claim no infallibility. I merely express my honest opinion, formed against my earnest desire. I do not lay it down as law for others, though, of course, I believe that many others would come to the same conclusion. It appears to me that the story is one that cannot possibly be told within the compass to which you have limited yourself. The three principal people are, every one of them, in the wrong with the reader, and you cannot put any of them right, without making the story extend over a longer space of time, and without anatomising the souls of the actors more slowly and carefully. Nothing would justify the departure of Alice, but her having some strong reason to believe that in taking that step, *she saved her lover*. In your intentions as to that lover's transfer of his affections to Eleanor, I descry a striking truth; but I think it confusedly wrought out, and all but certain to fail in expressing itself. Eleanor, I regard as forced and overstrained. The natural result is, that she carries a train of anti-climax after her. I particularly notice this at the point when she thinks she is going to be drowned.

The whole idea of the story is sufficiently difficult to require the most exact truth and the greatest knowledge and skill in the colouring throughout. In this respect I have no doubt of its being extremely defective. The people do not talk as such people would; and the little subtle touches of description which, by making the country house and the general scene real, would give an air of reality to the people (much to be desired), are altogether wanting. The more you set yourself to the illustration of your heroine's passionate nature, the more indispensable this attendant atmosphere of truth becomes. It would, in a manner, oblige the reader to believe in her. Whereas, for ever exploding like a great fire-

work without any background, she glares and wheels and hisses, and goes out, and has lighted nothing.

Lastly, I fear she is too convulsive from beginning to end. Pray reconsider, from this point of view, her brow, and her eyes, and her drawing herself up to her full height, and her being a perfumed presence, and her floating into rooms, also her asking people how they dare, and the like, on small provocation. When she hears her music being played, I think she is particularly objectionable.

I have a strong belief that if you keep this story by you three or four years, you will form an opinion of it not greatly differing from mine. There is so much good in it, so much reflection, so much passion and earnestness, that, if my judgment be right, I feel sure you will come over to it. On the other hand, I do not think that its publication, as it stands, would do you service, or be agreeable to you hereafter.

I have no means of knowing whether you are patient in the pursuit of this art; but I am inclined to think that you are not, and that you do not discipline yourself enough. When one is impelled to write this or that, one has still to consider: 'How much of this will tell for what I mean? How much of it is my own wild emotion and superfluous energy—how much remains that is truly belonging to this ideal character and these ideal circumstances?' It is in the laborious struggle to make this distinction, and in the determination to try for it, that the road to the correction of faults lies. (Perhaps I may remark, in support of the sincerity with which I write this, that I am an impatient and impulsive person myself, but that it has been for many years the constant effort of my life to practise at my desk what I preach to you.)

I should not have written so much, or so plainly, but for your last letter to me. It seems to demand that I should be strictly true with you, and I am so in this letter, without any reservation either way.

Very faithfully yours.



OFFICE OF 'HOUSEHOLD WORDS,' *Monday, First June, 1857.*

Mr. Frank  
Stone,  
A.R.A.

MY DEAR STONE,—I know that what I am going to say will not be agreeable; but I rely on the authoress's good sense; and say it, knowing it to be the truth.

These 'Notes' are destroyed by too much smartness. It gives the appearance of perpetual effort, stabs to the heart the nature that is in them, and wearies by the manner and not by the matter. It is the commonest fault in the world (as I have constant occasion to observe here), but it is a very great one. Just as you couldn't bear to have an *épergne* or a candlestick on your table, supported by a light figure always on tiptoe and evidently in an impossible attitude for the sustainment of its weight, so all readers would be more or less oppressed and worried by this presentation of everything in one smart point of view, when they know it must have other, and weightier, and more solid properties. Airiness and good spirits are always delightful, and are inseparable from notes of a cheerful trip; but they should sympathise with many things as well as see them in a lively way. It is but a word or a touch that expresses this humanity, but without that little embellishment of good nature there is no such thing as humour. In this little MS. everything is too much patronised and condescended to, whereas the slightest touch of feeling for the rustic who is of the earth earthy, or of sisterhood with the homely servant who has made her face shine in her desire to please, would make a difference that the writer can scarcely imagine without trying it. The only relief in the twenty-one slips is the little bit about the chimes. It is a relief, simply because it is an indication of some kind of sentiment. You don't want any sentiment laboriously made out in such a thing. You don't want any maudlin show of it. But you do want a pervading suggestion that it is there. It makes all the difference between being playful and being cruel. Again I must say, above all things—especially to young people writing: For the love of God don't condescend! Don't assume the attitude of saying, 'See how clever I am, and what fun everybody else is!' Take any shape but that.

I observe an excellent quality of observation throughout, and think the boy at the shop, and all about him, particularly good. I have no doubt whatever that the rest of the journal will be much better if the writer chooses to make it so. If she considers for a moment within herself, she will know that she derived pleasure from everything she saw, because she saw it with innumerable lights and shades upon it, and bound to humanity by innumerable fine links; she cannot possibly communicate anything of that pleasure to another by showing it from one little limited point only, and that point, observe, the one from which it is impossible to detach the exponent as the patroness of a whole universe of inferior souls. This is what everybody would mean in objecting to these notes (supposing them to be published), that they are too smart and too flippant.

As I understand this matter to be altogether between us three, and as I think your confidence, and hers, imposes a duty of friendship on me, I discharge it to the best of my ability. Perhaps I make more of it than you may have meant or expected; if so, it is because I am interested and wish to express it. If there had been anything in my objection not perfectly easy of removal, I might, after all, have hesitated to state it; but that is not the case. A very little indeed would make all this gaiety as sound and wholesome and good-natured in the reader's mind as it is in the writer's.

Affectionately always.

No. 16 WELLINGTON STREET NORTH, STRAND,  
*First June (Monday), 1857.*

MY DEAR COLLINS,—In consequence of bedevilment at Gad's Hill, arising from the luggage wandering over the face of the earth, I shall have to pass to-morrow behind a hedge, attired in leaves from my own fig-tree. Will you therefore consider our appointment to stand for next day—Wednesday?

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

When last heard of the family itself (including the birds and the goldfinch on his perch) had been swept away from the stupefied John by a crowd of Whitsun holiday-makers,



and had gone (without tickets) somewhere down into Sussex. A desperate calmness has fallen upon me. I don't care.  
Faithfully ever.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM, *Thursday, Fourth June, 1857.*

Anony-  
mous.

My Dear ——,—Coming home here last night, from a day's business in London, I found your most excellent note awaiting me, in which I have had a pleasure to be derived from none but good and natural things. I can now honestly assure you that I believe you will write *well*, and that I have a lively hope that I may be the means of showing you yourself in print one day. Your powers of graceful and light-hearted observation need nothing but the little touches on which we are both agreed. And I am perfectly sure that they will be as pleasant to you as to any one, for nobody can see so well as you do, without feeling kindly too.

To confess the truth to you, I was half sorry, yesterday, that I had been so unreserved; but not half as sorry, yesterday, as I am glad to-day. You must not mind my adding that there is a noble candour and modesty in your note, which I shall never be able to separate from you henceforth.

Affectionately yours always.

GAD'S HILL, *Saturday, Sixth June, 1857.*

Mr. Henry  
Austin.

MY DEAR HENRY,—Here is a very serious business on the great estate respecting the water supply. Last night they had pumped the well dry merely in raising the family supply for the day; and this morning (very little water having been got into the cisterns) it is dry again! It is pretty clear to me that we must look the thing in the face, and at once bore deeper, dig, or do some beastly thing or other, to secure this necessary in abundance. Meanwhile I am in a most plaintive and forlorn condition without your presence and counsel. I raise my voice in the wilderness and implore the same!!!

Wild legends are in circulation among the servants how that Captain Goldsmith on the knoll above—the skipper in that crow's-nest of a house—has millions of gallons of water

always flowing for him. Can he have damaged my well? Can we imitate him, and have our millions of gallons? Goldsmith or I must fall, so I conceive.

If you get this, send me a telegraph message informing me when I may expect comfort. I am held by four of the family while I write this, in case I should do myself a mischief—it certainly won't be taking to drinking water.

Ever affectionately (most despairingly).

'H. W.' OFFICE, *Sixteenth June, 1857.*

MY DEAR COLLINS,—What an unlucky fellow you are! What a foot you have for putting it into anything! Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

I write this to Harley Place, having been unable to write yesterday. I must be in town on Thursday, and will come up to you. I will try to come at about twelve.

Mrs. Wills' lameness makes a new Esther the first thing wanted. You once said you knew a lady who could and would have done it. Is that lady producible?

Ever faithfully.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE,  
*Friday Night, Twenty-sixth June, 1857.*

MY DEAR COLLINS,—I am so sensible of that First Act's requiring—for the old hands—so much care in a less feverish atmosphere than the Theatre, that I must propose Rehearsals of the Ladies here (our house is stripped, and has plenty of room), on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. The hour must rest principally with Mrs. Dickinson, but I should like it best in the evening—say at eight. However, my time is the Play's. There is a great deal at stake, and it *must be* well done. Will you see Mrs. Dickinson between this and Monday's rehearsal, and consult her convenience on the point? The same.

I shall be at the Gallery during the greater part of to-morrow, and shall dine at the Garrick at six before going to the Concert.

Ever faithfully.



## 542 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Monday, Thirteenth July, 1857.*

Mr. W. C.  
Macready.

MY DEAREST MACREADY,—Many thanks for your Indian information. I shall act upon it in the most exact manner. Walter sails next Monday. Charley and I go down with him to Southampton next Sunday. We are all delighted with the prospect of seeing you at Gad's Hill. These are my Jerrold engagements: On Friday, the twenty-fourth, I have to repeat my reading at St. Martin's Hall; on Saturday, the twenty-fifth, to repeat *The Frozen Deep* at the Gallery of Illustration for the last time. On Thursday, the thirtieth, or Friday, the thirty-first, I shall probably read at Manchester. Deane, the general manager of the Exhibition, is going down to-night, and will arrange all the preliminaries for me. If you and I went down to Manchester together, and were there on a Sunday, he would give us the whole Exhibition to ourselves. It is probable, I think (as he estimates the receipts of a night at about seven hundred pounds), that we may, in about a fortnight or so after the reading, play *The Frozen Deep* at Manchester. But of this contingent engagement I at present know no more than you do.

Now, will you, upon this exposition of affairs, choose your own time for coming to us, and, when you have made your choice, write to me at Gad's Hill? I am going down this afternoon for rest (which means violent cricket with the boys) after last Saturday night; which was a teaser, but triumphant. The St. Martin's Hall audience was, I must confess, a very extraordinary thing. The two thousand and odd people were like one, and their enthusiasm was something awful.

Yet I have seen that before, too. Your young remembrance cannot recall the man; but he flourished in my day—a great actor, sir—a noble actor—thorough artist! I have seen him do wonders in that way. He retired from the stage early in life (having a monomaniacal delusion that he was old), and is said to be still living in your county.—Ever, my dearest Macready,

Most affectionately yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Sunday, Nineteenth July, 1857.*

MY DEAR YATES,—Although I date this ashore, I really write it from Southampton. I have come here on an errand which will grow familiar to you before you know that Time has flapped his wings over your head. Like me, you will find those babies grow to be young men before you are quite sure they are born. Like me, you will have great teeth drawn with a wrench, and will only then know that you ever cut them. I am here to send Walter away over what they call, in Green Bush melodramas, ‘the Big Drink,’ and I don’t at all know this day how he comes to be mine, or I his.

Mr.  
Edmund  
Yates.

I don’t write to say this—or to say how, seeing Charley and he going aboard the ship before me just now, I suddenly came into possession of a photograph of my own back at sixteen and twenty, and also into a suspicion that I had doubled the last age. I merely write to mention that Telbin and his wife are going down to Gad’s Hill with us, about mid-day next Sunday, and that if you and Mrs. Yates will come too, we shall be delighted to have you. We can give you a bed, and you can be in town (if you have such a savage necessity) by twenty minutes before ten on Monday morning.

I was very much pleased (as I had reason to be) with your account of the reading in the *Daily News*. I thank you heartily.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF THE LATE MR. DOUGLAS JERROLD

COMMITTEE’S OFFICE, GALLERY OF ILLUSTRATION, REGENT STREET,  
*Thursday, Thirtieth July, 1857.*

MY DEAR MR. COOKE,—I cannot rest satisfied this morning without writing to congratulate you on your admirable performance of last night. It was so fresh and vigorous, so manly and gallant, that I felt as if it splashed against my theatre-heated face, along with the spray of the breezy sea. What I felt everybody felt; I should feel it quite an impertinence to take myself out of the crowd, therefore, if I could by any means help doing so. But I

Mr. T. P.  
Cooke.



can't; so I hope you will feel that you bring me on yourself, and have only yourself to blame.

Always faithfully yours.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER,  
*Sunday Night, Second August, 1857.*

Mrs.  
Compton.

MY DEAR MRS. COMPTON,—We are going to play *The Frozen Deep* (pursuant to requisition from town magnates, etc.) at Manchester, at the New Free Trade Hall, on the nights of Friday and Saturday, the Twenty-first and Twenty-second August.

The place is out of the question for my girls. Their action could not be seen, and their voices could not be heard. You and I have played, there and elsewhere, so sociably and happily, that I am emboldened to ask you whether you would play my sister-in-law Georgina's part (Compton and babies permitting).

We shall go down in the old pleasant way, and shall have the Art Treasures Exhibition to ourselves on the Sunday; when even 'he' (as Rogers always called every pretty woman's husband) might come and join us.

What do you say? What does he say? and what does baby say? When I use the term 'baby,' I use it in two tenses—present and future.

Answer me at this address, like the Juliet I saw at Drury Lane—when was it?—yesterday. And whatever your answer is, if you will say that you and Compton will meet us at the North Kent Station, London Bridge, next Sunday at a quarter before one, and will come down here for a breath of sweet air and stay all night, you will give your old friends great pleasure. Not least among them,

Yours faithfully.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Sunday Morning, Second August, 1857.*

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

MY DEAR COLLINS,—I write this on my way back to Gad's Hill from Manchester.

As our sum is not made up, and as I had urgent Deputation and so forth from Manchester Magnates at the reading on Friday night, I have arranged to act *The Frozen*

*Deep* in the Free Trade Hall, on Friday and Saturday nights, the 21st and 22nd. It is *an immense place*, and we shall be obliged to have actresses—though I have written to our friend Mrs. Dickinson to say that I don't fear her, if she likes to play with them. (I am already trying to get the best who *have been* on the stage.)

Whether Charley can play his part or not, I will tell him to let you know directly.

I had a letter from the Olympic the other day, begging me to go to a rehearsal. I have appointed next Friday, if agreeable and convenient.—In haste, . Ever faithfully.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER,  
Monday, Third August, 1857.

MY DEAREST MACREADY,—I read at Manchester last Friday. As many thousand people were there as you like to name. The collection of pictures in the Exhibition is wonderful. And the power with which the modern English school asserts itself is a very gratifying and delightful thing to behold. The care for the common people, in the provision made for their comfort and refreshment, is also admirable and worthy of all commendation. But they want more amusement, and particularly (as it strikes me) *something in motion*, though it were only a twisting fountain. The thing is too still after their lives of machinery, and art flies over their heads in consequence.

I hope you have seen my tussle with the *Edinburgh*. I saw the chance last Friday week, as I was going down to read the *Carol* in St. Martin's Hall. Instantly turned to, then and there, and wrote half the article. Flew out of bed early next morning, and finished it by noon. Went down to the Gallery of Illustration (we acted that night), did the day's business, corrected the proofs in Polar costume in dressing-room, broke up two numbers of *Household Words* to get it out directly, played in *Frozen Deep* and *Uncle John*, presided at supper of company, made no end of speeches, went home and gave in completely for four hours, then got sound asleep, and next day was as fresh as you used to be in the far-off days of your lusty youth.

Ever and ever affectionately.

Mr. W. C.  
Macready.



TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Sunday Afternoon, Ninth August, 1857.*

Mr. Frank  
Stone,  
A.R.A.

MY DEAR STONE,—Now here, without any preface, is a good, confounding, stunning question for you—would you like to play ‘Uncle John’ on the two nights at Manchester?

It is not a long part. You could have a full rehearsal on the Friday, and I could sit in the wing at night and pull you through all the business. Perhaps you might not object to being in the thing in your own native place, and the relief to me would be enormous.

It’s a capital part, and you are a capital old man. You know the play as we play it, and the Manchester people don’t. Say the word, and I’ll send you my own book by return of post.

The agitation and exertion of Richard Wardour are so great to me, that I cannot rally my spirits in the short space of time I get. The strain is so great to make a show of doing it, that I want to be helped out of ‘Uncle John’ if I can. Think of yourself far more than me; but if you half think you are up to the joke, and half doubt your being so, then give me the benefit of the doubt and play the part.

Ever affectionately.

GAD’S HILL PLACE, *Saturday, Fifteenth August, 1857.*

Mr. Henry  
Austin.

MY DEAR HENRY,—At last, I am happy to inform you, we have got at a famous spring!! It rushed in this morning, ten foot deep. And our friends talk of its supplying ‘a ton a minute for yourself and your family, sir, for evermore.’

They ask leave to bore ten feet lower, to prevent the possibility of what they call ‘a choking with sullage.’ Likewise, they are going to insert ‘a rose-headed pipe’; at the mention of which implement, I am (secretly) well-nigh distracted, having no idea of what it means. But I have said ‘Yes,’ besides instantly standing a bottle of gin. Can you come back, and can you get down on Monday morning, to advise and endeavour to decide on the mechanical force we shall use for raising the water?

Ever affectionately.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, *Monday, Seventeenth August, 1857.*

MY DEAR STONE,—I received your kind note this morning, and write this reply here to take to London with me and post in town, being bound for that village and three days' drill of the professional ladies who are to succeed the Tavistock girls.

Mr. Frank  
Stone,  
A.R.A.

My book I enclose. You will not find the situations or business difficult, with me on the spot to put you right.

Now, as to the dress. You will want a pair of pumps and a pair of white silk socks; these you can get at Manchester. The extravagantly and anciently-frilled shirts that I have had got up for the part, I will bring you down; large white waistcoat, I will bring you down; large white hat, I will bring you down; dressing-gown, I will bring you down; white gloves and ditto choker you can get at Manchester. There then remain only a pair of common nankeen tights, to button below the calf, and blue wedding-coat. The nankeen tights you had best get made at once; my 'Uncle John' coat I will send you down in a parcel by to-morrow's train, to have altered in Manchester to your shape and figure. You will then be quite independent of Christian chance and Jewish Nathan, which latter potentate is now at Canterbury with the cricket amateurs, and might fail.

As I have already suggested, with a careful rehearsal on Friday morning, and with me at the wing at night to put you right, you will find yourself sliding through it easily. There is nothing in the least complicated in the business. As to the dance, you have only to knock yourself up for a twelvemonth and it will go nobly.

After all, too, if you *should*, through any unlucky breakdown, come to be afraid of it, I am no worse off than I was before, if I have to do it at last. Keep your pecker up with that.

I am heartily obliged to you, my dear old boy, for your affectionate and considerate note, and I wouldn't have you do it, really and sincerely—immense as the relief will be to me—unless you are quite comfortable in it, and able to enjoy it.

Ever affectionately.



## 548 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

GARRICK CLUB, *Monday Evening, Seventeenth August, 1857.*

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

MY DEAR COLLINS,—Fred Evans' grandmother being evidently on the point of Death, no Evans is available (as I learn on coming to town to-night) for Manchester. This leaves to be supplied Easel and Bateson. I immediately think of your brother Charles and Luard. If it had been a purely managerial and not personal case, I should have proposed to Luard to do one of the parts and to your brother to do the other. But I think it right that Charles Collins should first select for himself. Now, will you, before you come to the Rehearsal to-morrow, arrange with him whether he will play one—which one—or both; and if he leaves one, will you call on Luard as you come down and offer that one to him?

I write at Express pace, but you will understand all I mean.

Ever faithfully.

OFFICE OF 'HOUSEHOLD WORDS,' *Tuesday, Eighteenth August, 1857.*

Mr. Frank  
Stone,  
A.R.A.

MY DEAR STONE,—I sent you a telegraph message last night, in total contradiction of the letter you received from me this morning.

The reason was simply this: Arthur Smith and the other business men, both in Manchester and here, urged upon me, in the strongest manner, that they were afraid of the change; that it was well known in Manchester that I had done the part in London; that there was a danger of its being considered disrespectful in me to give it up; also that there was a danger that it might be thought that I did so at the last minute, after an immense let, whereas I might have done it at first, etc. etc. etc. Having no desire but for the success of our object, and a becoming recognition on my part of the kind Manchester public's cordiality, I gave way, and thought it best to go on.

I do so against the grain, and against every inclination, and against the strongest feeling of gratitude to you. My people at home will be miserable too when they hear I am going to do it. If I could have heard from you sooner, and got the bill out sooner, I should have been firmer in consid-

ering my own necessity of relief. As it is, I sneak under; and I hope you will feel the reasons, and approve.

Ever affectionately.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Saturday, Twenty-ninth August, 1857.*

MY DEAR COLLINS,—Partly in the grim despair and restlessness of this subsidence from excitement, and partly for the sake of *Household Words*, I want to cast about whether you and I can go anywhere—take any tour—see anything—whereon we could write something together. Have you any idea tending to any place in the world? Will you rattle your head and see if there is any pebble in it which we could wander away and play at marbles with? We want something for *Household Words*, and I want to escape from myself. For when I *do* start up and stare myself seedily in the face, as happens to be my case at present, my blankness is inconceivable—indescribable—my misery amazing.

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

I shall be in town on Monday. Shall we talk then? Shall we talk at Gad's Hill? *What* shall we do? As I close this I am on my way back by train. Ever faithfully.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, *Wednesday, Second September, 1857.*

MY DEAR HENRY,—The second conspirator has been here this morning to ask whether you wish the windlass to be left in the yard, and whether you will want him and his mate any more, and, if so, when? Of course he says (rolling something in the form of a fillet in at one broken tooth all the while, and rolling it out at another) that they could wish fur to have the windlass if it warn't any ways a hill convenience fur to fetch her away. I have told him that if he will come back on Friday he shall have your reply. Will you, therefore, send it me by return of post? He says he 'll 'look up' (as if he was an astronomer) 'a Friday arter-dinner.'

Mr. Henry  
Austin.

On Monday I am going away with Collins for ten days or a fortnight, on a 'tour in search of an article' for *Household Words*. We have not the least idea where we are going; but *he* says, 'Let's look at the Norfolk coast,' and *I* say, 'Let's



look at the back of the Atlantic.' I don't quite know what I mean by that; but have a general impression that I mean something knowing.

I am horribly used up after the Jerrold business. Low spirits, low pulse, low voice, intense reaction. If I were not like Mr. Micawber, 'falling back for a spring' on Monday, I think I should slink into a corner and cry.

Ever affectionately.

ALLONBY, CUMBERLAND, *Wednesday Night, Ninth September, 1857.*

MY DEAR GEORGY,

Miss  
Hogarth.

Think of Collins' usual luck with me! We went up a Cumberland mountain yesterday—a huge black hill, fifteen hundred feet high. We took for a guide a capital innkeeper hard by. It rained in torrents—as it only does rain in a hill country—the whole time. At the top, there were black mists and the darkness of night. It then came out that the innkeeper had not been up for twenty years, and he lost his head and himself altogether; and we couldn't get down again! What wonders the Inimitable performed with his compass until it broke with the heat and wet of his pocket, no matter; it did break, and then we wandered about, until it was clear to the Inimitable that the night must be passed there, and the enterprising travellers probably die of cold. We took our own way about coming down, struck, and declared that the guide might wander where he would, but we would follow a watercourse we lighted upon, and which must come at last to the river. This necessitated amazing gymnastics; in the course of which performances, Collins fell into the said watercourse with his ankle sprained, and the great ligament of the foot and leg swollen I don't know how big.

How I enacted Wardour over again in carrying him down, and what a business it was to get him down; I may say in Gibbs' words: 'Vi lascio a giudicare!' But he was got down somehow, and we got off the mountain somehow; and now I carry him to bed, and into and out of carriages, exactly like Wardour in private life. I don't believe he will stand for a month to come. He has had a doctor, and can wear neither

shoe nor stocking, and has his foot wrapped up in a flannel waistcoat, and has a breakfast saucer of liniment, and a horrible dabbling of lotion incessantly in progress. We laugh at it all, but I doubt very much whether he can go on to Doncaster. It will be a miserable blow to our *H. W.* scheme, and I say nothing about it as yet; but he is really so crippled that I doubt the getting him there. We have resolved to fall to work to-morrow morning and begin our writing; and there, for the present, that point rests.

This is a little place with fifty houses, five bathing-machines, five girls in straw hats, five men in straw hats, and no other company. The little houses are all in half-mourning—yellow stone on white stone, and black; and it reminds me of what Broadstairs might have been if it had not inherited a cliff, and had been an Irishman. But this is a capital little homely inn, looking out upon the sea; and we are really very comfortably lodged. We have a very obliging and comfortable landlady; and it is a clean nice place in a rough wild country. We came here haphazard, but could not have done better.

We lay last night at a place called Wigton—also in half-mourning—with the wonderful peculiarity that it had no population, no business, no streets to speak of; but five linendrapers within range of our small windows, one linendraper's next door, and five more linendrapers round the corner. I ordered a night-light in my bedroom. A queer little old woman brought me one of the common Child's night-lights, and seeming to think that I looked at it with interest, said: 'It's joost a vara keeyourious thing, sir, and joost new coom oop. It'll burn awt hoors a' end, and no gootther, nor no waste, nor ony sike a thing, if you can creedit what I say, seein' the airticle.'

Ever affectionately.

LANCASTER, *Saturday Night, Twelfth September, 1857.*

MY DEAR GEORGY,—I received your letter at <sup>Miss</sup> Allonby yesterday, and was delighted to get it. <sup>Hogarth.</sup> We came back to Carlisle last night (to a capital inn, kept by Breach's brother), and came on here to-day. We are on our way to Doncaster; but, although it is not a hundred



miles from here, we shall have, as well as I can make out the complicated list of trains, to sleep at Leeds to-morrow night.

Accustomed as you are to the homage which men delight to render to the Inimitable, you would be scarcely prepared for the proportions it assumes in this northern country. Station-masters assist him to alight from carriages, deputations await him in hotel entries, innkeepers bow down before him and put him into regal rooms, the town goes down to the platform to see him off, and Collins' ankle goes into the newspapers!!!

It is a great deal better than it was, and he can get into new hotels and up the stairs with two thick sticks, like an admiral in a farce. His spirits have improved in a corresponding degree, and he contemplates cheerfully the keeping house at Doncaster. I thought (as I told you) he would never have gone there, but he seems quite up to the mark now. Of course he can never walk out, or see anything of any place.

The landlady of the little inn at Allonby lived at Greta Bridge, in Yorkshire, when I went down there before *Nickleby*, and was smuggled into the room to see me, when I was secretly found out. She is an immensely fat woman now. 'But I could tuck my arm round her waist then, Mr. Dickens,' the landlord said when she told me the story as I was going to bed the night before last. 'And can't you do it now,' I said, 'you insensible dog? Look at me! Here's a picture!' Accordingly, I got round as much of her as I could; and this gallant action was the most successful I have ever performed, on the whole. I think it was the dullest little place I ever entered; and what with the monotony of an idle sea, and what with the monotony of another sea in the room (occasioned by Collins' perpetually holding his ankle over a pail of salt water, and laving it with a milk jug), I struck yesterday, and came away.

We are in a very remarkable old house here, with genuine old rooms and an uncommonly quaint staircase. I have a state bedroom, with two enormous red four-posters in it, each as big as Charley's room at Gad's Hill. Bellew is to preach here to-morrow. 'And we know he is a friend of yours, sir,'

said the landlord, when he presided over the serving of the dinner (two little salmon trout; a sirloin steak; a brace of partridges; seven dishes of sweets; five dishes of dessert, led off by a bowl of peaches; and in the centre an enormous bride-cake—‘We always have it here, sir,’ said the landlord, ‘custom of the house’). Collins turned pale, and estimated the dinner at half a guinea each.

This is the stupidest of all letters, but all description is gone or going, into *The Lazy Tour of Two Idle Apprentices*.

Ever affectionately, my dearest Georgy.

ANGEL HOTEL, DONCASTER, Tuesday, Fifteenth September, 1857.

MY DEAR GEORGY,—I found your letter here on my arrival yesterday. I had hoped that the wall <sup>Miss Hogarth.</sup> would have been almost finished by this time, and the additions to the house almost finished too—but patience, patience!

We have very good, clean, and quiet apartments here, on the second floor, looking down into the main street, which is full of horse jockeys, bettors, drunkards, and other blackguards, from morning to night—and all night. The races begin to-day and last till Friday, which is the Cup Day. I am not going to the course this morning, but have engaged a carriage (open, and pair) for to-morrow and Friday.

*The Frozen Deep’s* author gets on as well as could be expected. He can hobble up and down stairs when absolutely necessary, and limps to his bedroom on the same floor. He talks of going to the theatre to-night in a cab, which will be the first occasion of his going out, except to travel, since the accident. He sends his kind regards and thanks for enquiries and condolence. I am perpetually tidying the rooms after him, and carrying all sorts of untidy things which belong to him into his bedroom, which is a picture of disorder. You will please to imagine mine, airy and clean, little dressing-room attached, eight water-jugs (I never saw such a supply), capital sponge-bath, perfect arrangement, and exquisite neatness. We breakfast at half-past eight, and fall to work for *H. W.* afterwards. Then I go out, and—hem! look for subjects.

Ever affectionately.



## 554 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

GAD'S HILL PLACE, *Saturday Evening, Third October, 1857.*

Mr. Arthur  
Ryland.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have had the honour and pleasure of receiving your letter of the twenty-eighth of last month, informing me of the distinction that has been conferred upon me by the council of the Birmingham and Midland Institute.

Allow me to assure you with much sincerity, that I am highly gratified by having been elected one of the first honorary members of that establishment. Nothing could have enhanced my interest in so important an undertaking; but the compliment is all the more welcome to me on that account.

I accept it with a due sense of its worth, with many acknowledgments and with all good wishes.—I am ever, my dear Sir,  
Very faithfully yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Monday Night, Sixteenth November, 1857.*

Mr.  
Edmund  
Yates.

MY DEAR YATES,—I retain the story with pleasure; and I need not tell you that you are not mistaken in the last lines of your note.

Excuse me, on that ground, if I say a word or two as to what I think (I mention it with a view to the future) might be better in the paper. The opening is excellent. But it passes too completely into the Irishman's narrative, does not light it up with the life about it, or the circumstances under which it is delivered, and does not carry through it, as I think it should with a certain indefinable subtleness, the thread with which you begin your weaving. I will tell Wills to send me the proof, and will try to show you what I mean when I shall have gone over it carefully. Faithfully yours always.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Wednesday, Thirteenth December, 1857.*

Mr. Frank  
Stone,  
A.R.A.

MY DEAR STONE,—I find on enquiry that the 'General Theatrical Fund' has relieved non-members in one or two instances; but that it is exceedingly unwilling to do so, and would certainly not do so again, saving on some very strong and exceptional case. As its trustee, I could not represent to it that I think it ought to sail

into those open waters, for I very much doubt the justice of such cruising, with a reference to the interests of the patient people who support it out of their small earnings.

Affectionately ever.



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# BOOK III

1858 TO 1870



THE END

OF THE

1858

NARRATIVE

ALL through this year, Charles Dickens was constantly moving about from place to place. After much and careful consideration, he had come to the determination for the future of giving readings for his own benefit. And although in the spring he gave one reading of his *Christmas Carol* for a charity, all the other readings, beginning from the Twenty-ninth of April, and ever after, were for himself. In the autumn he made reading tours in England, Scotland, and Ireland, always accompanied by his friend and secretary, Mr. Arthur Smith. At Newcastle, Charles Dickens was joined by his daughters, who accompanied him in his Scotch tour. The letters to his sister-in-law, and to his eldest daughter, are given here, and will be given in the sections dealing with the future reading tours, as they form a complete diary of his life and movements at these times. To avoid the constant repetition of the two names, the beginning of the letters will be dispensed with in all cases where they follow each other in unbroken succession.

We give the short note to Mr. Langford—well known for many years to all literary people in London—on account of the interest of its subject. Mr. Langford published the note in the *Daily News* almost immediately after the lamented death of George Eliot.

The Mr. Frederick Lehmann mentioned in the letter written from Sheffield, had married a daughter of Mr. Robert Chambers, and niece of Mrs. Wills. Coming to settle in London a short time after this date, Mr. and Mrs. Lehmann became intimately known to Charles Dickens and his family—more especially to his eldest daughter, to whom they have been, and are, the kindest and truest of friends. The ‘pretty little boy’ mentioned as being under Mrs. Wills’ care, is their eldest son.



The 'little speech' alluded to in this first letter to Mr. Macready was one made by Charles Dickens at a public dinner, which was given in aid of the Hospital for Sick Children, in Great Ormond Street. He afterwards (early in April) gave a reading from his *Christmas Carol* for the same charity.

The Christmas number of *Household Words*, mentioned in a letter to Mr. Wilkie Collins, was called *A House to Let*, and contained stories written by Charles Dickens, Mr. Wilkie Collins, and other contributors to *Household Words*.

At the end of this year we give a letter addressed to Mr. Blanchard Jerrold, who, when he was writing the life of his father, requested Charles Dickens to write a few personal reminiscences of Mr. Douglas Jerrold, for the purpose of publication in his book.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Sunday, Seventeenth January, 1858.*

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

MY DEAR WILKIE,—I am very sorry to receive so bad an account of the foot; but I hope it is all in the past tense now.

I met with an incident the other day, which I think is a good deal in your way, for introduction either into a long or short story. Dr. Sutherland and Dr. Monroe went over St. Luke's with me (only last Friday), to show me some distinctly and remarkably-developed types of insanity. Among other patients, we passed a deaf and dumb man, now afflicted with incurable madness too, of whom they said that it was only when his madness began to develop itself in strongly-marked mad actions, that it began to be suspected, 'though it had been there, no doubt, some time.' This led me to consider, suspiciously, what employment he had been in, and so to ask the question. 'Aye,' says Dr. Sutherland, 'that is the most remarkable thing of all, Mr. Dickens. He was employed in the transmission of electric-telegraph messages; and it is impossible to conceive what delirious despatches that man may have been sending about all over the world!'

Rejoiced to hear such good report of the play.

Ever faithfully.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, W.C., *Eighteenth January*, 1858.

MY DEAR LANGFORD,—Will you—by such Mr. Joseph Langford.  
 roundabout ways and methods as may present  
 themselves—convey the note of thanks (enclosed) to the au-  
 thor of *Scenes of Clerical Life*, whose two first stories I can  
 never say enough of, I think them so truly admirable. But  
 if those two volumes, or a part of them, were not written by  
 a woman, then should I begin to believe that I am a woman  
 myself. Faithfully yours always.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Tuesday, Second February*, 1858.

MY DEAR YATES,—Your quotation is, as I sup-  
 posed, all wrong. The text is *not* ‘which his ’owls Mr. Edmund Yates.  
 was organs.’ When Mr. Harris went into an  
 empty dog-kennel, to spare his sensitive nature the anguish  
 of overhearing Mrs. Harris’ exclamations on the occasion of  
 the birth of her first child (the Princess Royal of the Harris  
 family), ‘he never took his hands away from his ears, or came  
 out once, till he was showed the baby.’ On encountering that  
 spectacle, he was (being of a weakly constitution) ‘took with  
 fits.’ For this distressing complaint he was medically  
 treated; the doctor ‘collared him, and laid him on his back  
 upon the airy stones’—please to observe what follows—‘and  
 she was told, to ease her mind, his ’owls was organs.’

That is to say, Mrs. Harris, lying exhausted on her bed,  
 in the first sweet relief of freedom from pain, merely covered  
 with the counterpane, and not yet ‘put comfortable,’ hears a  
 noise apparently proceeding from the back-yard, and says,  
 in a flushed and hysterical manner: ‘What ’owls are those?  
 Who is a-’owling? Not my ugebond?’ Upon which the doc-  
 tor, looking round one of the bottom posts of the bed, and  
 taking Mrs. Harris’ pulse in a reassuring manner, says, with  
 much admirable presence of mind: ‘Howls, my dear madam?  
 —no, no, no! What are we thinking of? Howls, my dear  
 Mrs. Harris? Ha, ha, ha! Organs, ma’am, organs. Or-  
 gans in the streets, Mrs. Harris; no howls.’

Yours faithfully.



## 562 · LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Tuesday, Second February, 1858.*

Mr. W. M.  
Thackeray.

MY DEAR THACKERAY,—The wisdom of Parliament, in that expensive act of its greatness which constitutes the Guild, prohibits that corporation *from doing anything* until it shall have existed in a perfectly useless condition for seven years. This clause (introduced by some private-bill magnate of official might) seemed so ridiculous, that nobody could believe it to have this meaning; but as I felt clear about it when we were on the very verge of granting an excellent literary annuity, I referred the point to counsel, and my construction was confirmed without a doubt.

It is therefore needless to enquire whether an association in the nature of a provident society could address itself to such a case as you confide to me. The prohibition has still two or three years of life in it.

But, assuming the gentleman's title to be considered as an 'author' as established, there is no question that it comes within the scope of the Literary Fund. They would habitually 'lend' money if they did what I consider to be their duty; as it is they only give money, but they give it in such instances.

I have forwarded the envelope to the Society of Arts, with a request that they will present it to Prince Albert, approaching H.R.H. in the Siamese manner. Ever faithfully.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Wednesday Night, Third February, 1858.*

Mr. John  
Forster.

MY DEAR FORSTER,—I beg to report two phenomena:

1. An excellent little play in one act, by Marston, at the Lyceum; title, *A Hard Struggle*; as good as *La Joie fait Peur*, though not at all like it.

2. Capital acting in the same play, by Mr. Dillon. Real good acting, in imitation of nobody, and honestly made out by himself!!

I went (at Marston's request) last night, and cried till I sobbed again. I have not seen a word about it from Oxford.<sup>1</sup> But it is as wholesome and manly a thing altogether as

<sup>1</sup> Mr. John Oxenford, at this time the dramatic critic of the *Times*.

I have seen for many a day. (I would have given a hundred pounds to have played Mr. Dillon's part.)

Ever affectionately.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Wednesday, Third February, 1858.*

MY DEAR MARSTON,—I most heartily and honestly congratulate you on your charming little piece. It moved me more than I could easily tell you, if I were to try. Except *La Joie fait Peur*, I have seen nothing nearly so good, and there is a subtlety in the comfortable presentation of the child who is to become a devoted woman for Reuben's sake, which goes a long way beyond Madame de Girardin. I am at a loss to let you know how much I admired it last night, or how heartily I cried over it. A touching idea, most delicately conceived and wrought out by a true artist and poet, in a spirit of noble, manly generosity, that no one should be able to study without great emotion.

Dr.  
Westland  
Marston.

It is extremely well acted by all concerned; but Mr. Dillon's performance is really admirable, and deserving of the highest commendation. It is good in these days to see an actor taking such pains, and expressing such natural and vigorous sentiment. There is only one thing I should have liked him to change. I am much mistaken if any man—least of all any such man—would crush a letter written by the hand of the woman he loved. Hold it to his heart unconsciously and look about for it the while, he might; or he might do anything with it that expressed a habit of tenderness and affection in association with the idea of her; but he would never crush it under any circumstances. He would as soon crush her heart.

You will see how closely I went with him by my minding so slight an incident in so fine a performance. There is no one who could approach him in it; and I am bound to add that he surprised me as much as he pleased me.

I think it might be worth while to try the people at the Français with the piece. They are very good in one-act plays; such plays take well there, and this seems to me well suited to them. If you would like Samson or Régnier to read



the play (in English) I know them well, and would be very glad indeed to tell them that I sent it with your sanction because I had been so much struck by it.

Faithfully yours always.

*Sixth February, 1858.*

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

MY DEAR WILKIE,—Thinking it may one day be interesting to you—say when you are weak in *both* feet, and when I and Doncaster are quiet, and the great race is over—to possess this little memorial of our joint Christmas work, I have put it together for you, and now send it on its coming home from the Binder.

Faithfully yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, LONDON, W.C., *Thursday, Eleventh February, 1858.*

Monsieur  
Régnier.

MY DEAR RÉGNIER,—I want you to read the enclosed little play. You will see that it is in one act—about the length of *La Joie fait Peur*. It is now acting at the Lyceum Theatre here, with very great success. The author is Mr. Westland Marston, a dramatic writer of reputation, who wrote a very well-known tragedy called *The Patrician's Daughter*, in which Macready and Miss Faucit acted (under Macready's management at Drury Lane) some years ago.

This little piece is so very powerful on the stage, its interest is so simple and natural, and the part of Reuben is such a very fine one, that I cannot help thinking you might make one grand *coup* with it, if with your skilful hand you arranged it for the Français. I have communicated this idea of mine to the author, '*et là-dessus je vous écris.*' I am anxious to know your opinion, and shall expect with much interest to receive a little letter from you at your convenience.—Ever, my dear Régnier,

Faithfully your Friend.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Saturday, Twentieth February, 1858.*

Monsieur  
Régnier.

MY DEAR RÉGNIER,—Let me thank you with all my heart for your most patient and kind letter. I made its contents known to Mr. Marston, and I enclose you

his reply. You will see that he cheerfully leaves the matter in your hands, and abides by your opinion and discretion.

You need not return his letter, my friend. There is great excitement here this morning, in consequence of the failure of the Ministry last night to carry the bill they brought in to please your Emperor and his troops. I, for one, am extremely glad of their defeat.

'Le vieux P——,' I have no doubt, will go staggering down the Rue de la Paix to-day, with his stick in his hand and his hat on one side, predicting the downfall of everything, in consequence of this event. His handwriting shakes more and more every quarter, and I think he mixes a great deal of cognac with his ink. He always gives me some astonishing piece of news (which is never true), or some suspicious public prophecy (which is never verified), and he always tells me he is dying (which he never is).

Adieu, my dear Régnier; accept a thousand thanks from me, and believe me, now and always,

Your affectionate and faithful Friend.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Fifteenth March*, 1858.

MY DEAREST MACREADY,—I have safely received Mr. W. C.  
Macready. your cheque this morning, and will hand it over forthwith to the honorary secretary of the hospital. I hope you have read the little speech in the hospital's publication of it. They had it taken by their own shorthand-writer, and it is done verbatim.

You may be sure that it is a good and kind charity. It is amazing to me that it is not at this day ten times as large and rich as it is. But I hope and trust that I have happily been able to give it a good thrust onward into a great course. I am devising all sorts of things in my mind, and am in a state of energetic restlessness incomprehensible to the calm philosophers of Dorsetshire. What a dream it is, this work and strife, and how little we do in the dream after all! Only last night, in my sleep, I was bent upon getting over a perspective of barriers, with my hands and feet bound. Pretty much what we are all about, waking, I think?

But, Lord! (as I said before) you smile pityingly, not bit-



terly, at this hubbub, and moralise upon it, in the calm evenings when there is no school at Sherborne.

Ever affectionately and truly.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.,  
*Wednesday, Fourteenth April, 1858.*

Mrs.  
 Hogge.<sup>1</sup>      MY DEAR MRS. HOGGE,—After the profoundest cogitation, I come reluctantly to the conclusion that I do not know that orphan. If you were the lady in want of him, I should certainly offer *myself*. But as you are not, I will not hear of the situation.

It is wonderful to think how many charming little people there must be, to whom this proposal would be like a revelation from Heaven. Why don't I know one, and come to Kensington, boy in hand, as if I had walked (I wish to God I had) out of a fairy tale! But no, I do *not* know that orphan. He is crying somewhere, by himself, at this moment. I can't dry his eyes. He is being neglected by some ogress of a nurse. I can't rescue him.

I will make a point of going to the Athenæum on Monday night; and if I had five hundred votes to give, Mr. Macdonald should have them all, for your sake.

I grieve to hear that you have been ill, but I hope that the spring, *when* it comes, will find you blooming with the rest of the flowers.

Very faithfully yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.,  
*Wednesday, Twenty-eighth April, 1858.*

Mr.  
 Edmund  
 Yates.      MY DEAR YATES,—For a good many years I have suffered a great deal from charities, but never anything like what I suffer now. The amount of correspondence they inflict upon me is really incredible. But this is nothing. Benevolent men get behind the piers of the gates, lying in wait for my going out; and when I peep shrinkingly from my study-windows, I see their pot-bellied shadows projected on the gravel. Benevolent bullies drive up in hansom cabs (with engraved portraits of their benevolent institutions hanging over the aprons, like banners on

<sup>1</sup> Niece to the Rev. W. Harness.

their outward walls), and stay long at the door. Benevolent area-sneaks get lost in the kitchens and are found to impede the circulation of the knife-cleaning machine. My man has been heard to say (at The Burton Arms) 'that if it was a wicious place, well and good—*that* an't door work; but that wen all the Christian wirtues is always a-shoulderin' and a-hel-berin' on you in the 'all, a-tryin' to git past you and cut up-stairs into master's room, why no wages as you couldn't name wouldn't make it up to you.' Persecuted ever.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE, W.C.,  
*Saturday Evening, Fifteenth May, 1858.*

MY DEAR MRS. YATES,<sup>1</sup>—Pray believe that I was sorry with all my heart to miss you last Thursday, and to learn the occasion of your absence; also that, whenever you can come, your presence will give me a new interest in that evening. No one alive can have more delightful associations with the lightest sound of your voice than I have; and to give you a minute's interest and pleasure in acknowledgment of the uncountable hours of happiness you gave me when you were a mysterious angel to me, would honestly gratify my heart.

Mrs. Yates.

Very faithfully and gratefully yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.,  
*Tuesday Night, Twenty-fifth May, 1858.*

MY DEAR WILKIE,—A thousand thanks for your kind letter. I always feel your friendship very much, and prize it in proportion to the true affection I have for you.

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

Your letter comes to me only to-night. Can you come round to me in the morning (Wednesday) before twelve? I can then tell you all in lieu of writing. It is rather a long story—over, I hope now. Ever affectionately.

<sup>1</sup> The charming actress, the mother of Mr. Edmund Yates.





42 39

II. The Prison in the Woods.

There we all stood, huddled up on the beach under the burning sun, with the pirates closing us in on every side — as forlorn a company of helpless men, women, and children, as ever was gathered together out of any nation in the world. Of the men of our party there were thirteen in all; every one of them son of a free-born man as well as disabled. Of the women there were fifteen. Of the children, including Miss Wace's three, there were seven. Altogether, thirty-five living souls, standing about were, on the very brink of another world. I kept my thoughts to myself, naturally, but when we were mustered on the beach in the manner I have described, I did not in my heart believe that anyone of our lives was worth five minutes' purchase.

FACSIMILE OF FIRST PARAGRAPH OF WILKIE COLLINS' CHAPTER OF CHRISTMAS STORY, 'THE PERILS OF CERTAIN ENGLISH PRISONERS,' FOR 'HOUSEHOLD WORDS,' 1857

GAD'S HILL, Wednesday, Seventh July, 1858.

M. De  
Cerjat.

MY DEAR CERJAT,—I should vainly try to tell you—so I won't try—how affected I have been by your warm-hearted letter, or how thoroughly well convinced I always am of the truth and earnestness of your friendship. I thank you, my dear, dear fellow, with my whole soul. I fervently return that friendship and I highly cherish it.

You want to know all about me? I am still reading in London every Thursday, and the audiences are very great, and the success immense. On the Second of August I am going away on a tour of some four months in England, Ireland, and Scotland. I shall read, during that time, not fewer than four or five times a week. It will be sharp work; but probably a certain musical clinking will come of it, which will mitigate the hardship.

At this present moment I am on my little Kentish freehold (*not* in top-boots, and not particularly prejudiced that I know of), looking on as pretty a view out of my study window as you will find in a long day's English ride. My little place is a grave red brick house, which I have added to and stuck bits upon in all manner of ways, so that it is as pleasantly irregular, and as violently opposed to all architectural ideas, as the most hopeful man could possibly desire. The robbery was committed before the door, on the man with the

treasure, and Falstaff ran away from the identical spot of ground now covered by the room in which I write. A little rustic alehouse, called The Sir John Falstaff, is over the way—has been over the way, ever since, in honour of the event. Cobham Woods and Park are behind the house; the distant Thames in front; the Medway, with Rochester, and its old castle and cathedral, on one side. The whole stupendous property is on the old Dover Road.

The blessed woods and fields have done me a world of good, and I am quite myself again. The children are all as happy as children can be. My eldest daughter, Mary, keeps house, with a state and gravity becoming that high position; wherein she is assisted by her sister Katie, and by her aunt Georgina, who is, and always has been, like another sister. Two big dogs, a bloodhound and a St. Bernard, direct from a convent of that name, where I think you once were, are their principal attendants in the green lanes. These latter instantly untie the neckerchiefs of all tramps and prowlers who approach their presence, so that they wander about without any escort, and drive big horses in basket-phaetons through murderous bye-ways, and never come to grief. They are very curious about your daughters, and send all kinds of loves to them and to Mrs. Cerjat, in which I heartily join.

You will have read in the papers that the Thames in London is most horrible. I have to cross Waterloo or London Bridge to get to the railroad when I come down here, and I can certify that the offensive smells, even in that short whiff, have been of a most head-and-stomach-distending nature. Nobody knows what is to be done; at least everybody knows a plan, and everybody else knows it won't do; in the meantime cartloads of chloride of lime are shot into the filthy stream, and do something I hope. You will know, before you get this, that the American telegraph line has parted again, at which most men are sorry, but very few surprised. This is all the news, except that there is an Italian Opera at Drury Lane, price eighteenpence to the pit, where Viardot, by far the greatest artist of them all, sings, and which is full when the dear opera can't let a box; and except that the weather



has been exceptionally hot, but is now quite cool. On the top of this hill it has been cold, actually cold at night, for more than a week past.

My dear Cerjat, I have written lightly enough, because I want you to know that I am becoming cheerful and hearty. God bless you! I love you, and I know that you love me.

Ever your attached and affectionate.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,  
*Sunday, First August, 1858.*

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

MY DEAR WILKIE,—I am off from here to-day, and enclose you (hastily) my Tour, and my address at each place. I hope you are enjoying yourself at Broadstairs—holding on by your great advance in health—and getting into the condition, physically, of Ben Caunt—morally, of William Shakespeare.

Charley's [Charles Collins] paper has a great deal in it that is very droll and good. I have sent it to the Printer.

With kind regards, ever affec'tly.

WEST HOE, PLYMOUTH, *Thursday, Fifth August, 1858.*

Miss  
Hogarth.

MY DEAREST GEORGY,—I received your letter this morning with the greatest pleasure, and read it with the utmost interest in all its domestic details.

We had a most wonderful night at Exeter. It is to be regretted that we cannot take the place again on our way back. It was a prodigious cram, and we turned away no end of people. But not only that, I think they were the finest audience I have ever read to. I don't think I ever read, in some respects, so well; and I never beheld anything like the personal affection which they poured out upon me at the end. It was really a remarkable sight, and I shall always look back upon it with pleasure.

Last night here was not so bright. There are quarrels of the strangest kind between the Plymouth people and the Stonehouse people. The room is at Stonehouse (Tracy says the wrong room; there being a Plymouth room in this hotel, and he being a Plymouthite). We had a fair house, but not at all a great one. All the notabilities come this morning to

‘Little Dombey.’ For ‘Mrs. Gamp and the Boots,’ to-night, we have also a very promising let. But the races are on, and there are two public balls to-night, and the yacht squadron are all at Cherbourg to boot.

The room is a very handsome one, but it is on the top of a windy and muddy hill, leading (literally) to nowhere; and it looks (except that it is new and *mortary*) as if the subsidence of the waters after the Deluge might have left it where it is. I have to go right through the company to get to the platform. Big doors slam and resound when anybody comes in; and all the company seem afraid of one another. Nevertheless they were a sensible audience last night, and much impressed and pleased.

Tracy is in the room (wandering about, and never finishing a sentence), and sends all manner of sea-loves to you and the dear girls. I send all manner of land-loves to you from myself, out of my heart of hearts, and also to my dear Plorn and the boys.

Arthur sends his kindest love. He knows only two characters. He is either always corresponding, like a Secretary of State, or he is transformed into a rout-furniture dealer of Rathbone Place, and drags forms about with the greatest violence, without his coat.—Ever, dearest Georgy,

Your most affectionate.

LONDON, *Saturday, Seventh August, 1858.*

MY DEAREST MAMEY,—The closing night at Plymouth was a very great scene, and the morning there was exceedingly good too. You will be glad to hear that at Clifton last night, a torrent of five hundred shillings bore Arthur away, pounded him against the wall, flowed on to the seats over his body, scratched him, and damaged his best dress suit. All to his unspeakable joy.

This is a very short letter, but I am going to the Burlington Arcade, desperately resolved to have all those wonderful instruments put into operation on my head, with a view to refreshing it.

Ever your affectionate.

Miss  
Dickens.



SWAN HOTEL, WORCESTER, *Wednesday Evening, Eleventh August, 1858.*

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

MY DEAR WILKIE,—I have just now toned down the capital unknown Public article a little here and there. Not because I dispute its positions, but because there are some things (true enough) that it would not be generous in me, as a novelist and a periodical editor, to put too prominently forward. You will not find it essentially changed anywhere.

Your letter gave me great pleasure, as all letters that you write me are sure to do. But the mysterious addresses, O misconstructive one, merely refer to places where Arthur Smith did not know aforehand the names of the best Hotels.

We have done exceedingly well since we have been out—with this remarkable (and pleasant) incident, that wherever I read twice, the turn-away is invariably on the second occasion. They don't quite understand beforehand what it is, I think, and expect a man to be sitting down in some corner, droning away like a mild bagpipe. In that large room at Clifton, for instance, the people were perfectly taken off their legs by *The Chimes*—started—looked at each other—started again—looked at me—and then burst into a storm of applause. I think the best audiences I have yet had were at Exeter and Plymouth—at Exeter, the best I have ever seen; at Plymouth I read three times, twice in one day. A better morning audience for 'Little Dombey' could not be. And the 'Boots' at night was a shout all through.

I cannot deny that I shall be heartily glad when it is all over, and that I miss the thoughtfulness of my quiet room and desk. But perhaps it is best for me not to have it just now, and to wear and toss my storm away—or as much of it as will ever calm down while the water rolls—in this restless manner. Arthur Smith knows I am writing to you, and sends his kindest regard. He is all usefulness and service. I never could have done without him—should have left the unredeemed Bills on the walls and taken flight.

This is a stupid letter, but I write it before dressing to read, and you know what a brute I am at such times.

Ever affectionately.

PS.—I miss Richard Wardour's dress, and always want to put it on. I would rather, by a great deal, act. Apropos of which I think I have a very fine notion of a part. It shall be yours.

SHREWSBURY, *Thursday, Twelfth August, 1858.*

MY DEAREST MAMEY,—A wonderful audience <sup>Miss Dickens</sup> last night at Wolverhampton. If such a thing can be, they were even quicker and more intelligent than the audience I had in Edinburgh. They were so wonderfully good and were so much on the alert this morning by nine o'clock for another reading, that we are going back there at about our Bradford time. I never saw such people. And the local agent would take no money, and charge no expenses of his own.

This place looks what Plorn would call 'ortily' dull. Local agent predicts, however, 'great satisfaction to Mr. Dickens, and excellent attendance.' I have just been to look at the hall, where everything was wrong, and where I have left Arthur making a platform for me out of dining-tables.

I have not felt the fatigue to any extent worth mentioning; though I get, every night, into the most violent heats. We are going to dine at three o'clock (it wants a quarter now) and have not been here two hours, so I have seen nothing of Clement.

Tell Georgy with my love, that I read in the same room in which we acted, but at the end opposite to that where our stage was. We are not at the inn where the amateur company put up, but at The Lion, where the fair Miss Mitchell was lodged alone. We have the strangest little rooms (sitting-room and two bedrooms altogether) the ceilings of which I can touch with my hand. The windows bulge out over the street, as if they were little stern-windows in a ship. And a door opens out of the sitting-room on to a little open gallery with plants in it, where one leans over a queer old rail, and looks all downhill and slantwise at the crookedest black and yellow old houses, all manner of shapes except straight shapes. To get into this room we come through a china closet; and



the man in laying the cloth has actually knocked down, in that repository, two geraniums and Napoleon Bonaparte.

I think that 's all I have to say, except that at the Wolverhampton theatre they played *Oliver Twist* last night (Mr. Toole the Artful Dodger), 'in consequence of the illustrious author honouring the town with his presence.'

John's spirits have been equable and good since we rejoined him. Berry has always got something the matter with his digestion—seems to me the male gender of Maria Jolly, and ought to take nothing but Revalenta Arabica.

Ever your affectionate Father.

ADELPHI HOTEL, LIVERPOOL, *Friday Night, Twentieth August, 1858.*

Miss  
Hogarth.

I write to report that my cold is decidedly better, thank God (though still bad), and that I hope to be able to stagger through to-night. After dinner yesterday I began to recover my voice, and I think I sang half the Irish Melodies to myself, as I walked about to test it. I got home at half-past ten, and mustard-poulticed and barley-watered myself tremendously.

I have been very hard to sleep, and last night I was all but sleepless. This morning I was very dull and seedy; but I got a good walk, and picked up again. It has been blowing all day, and I fear we shall have a sick passage over to Dublin to-morrow night.

Tell Mamie (with my dear love to her and Katie) that I will write to her from Dublin—probably on Sunday. Tell her too that the stories she told me in her letter were not only capital stories in themselves, but *excellently told* too.

What Arthur's state has been to-night—he, John, Berry, and Boylett, all taking money and going mad together—you *cannot* imagine. They turned away hundreds, sold all the books, rolled on the ground of my room knee-deep in checks, and made a perfect pantomime of the whole thing. He has kept quite well, I am happy to say, and sends a hundred loves.

Ever affectionately.

MORRISON'S HOTEL, DUBLIN, *Monday, Twenty-third August, 1858.*

We had a nasty crossing here. We left Holy-<sup>Miss</sup>head at one in the morning, and got here at six. <sup>Dickens.</sup> Arthur was incessantly sick the whole way. I was not sick at all, but was in as healthy a condition otherwise as humanity need be. We are in a beautiful hotel. Our sitting-room is exactly like the drawing-room at the Peschiere in all its dimensions. I never saw two rooms so exactly resembling one another in their proportions. Our bedrooms too are excellent, and there are bathis and all sorts of comforts.

The Lord Lieutenant is away, and the place looks to me as if its professional life were away too. Nevertheless, there are numbers of people in the streets. Somehow, I hardly seem to think we are going to do enormously here; but I have scarcely any reason for supposing so (except that a good many houses are shut up); and I *know* nothing about it, for Arthur is now gone to the agent and to the room. The men came by boat direct from Liverpool. They had a rough passage, were all ill, and did not get here till noon yesterday. Donnybrook Fair, or what remains of it, is going on, within two or three miles of Dublin. They went out there yesterday in a jaunting-car, and John described it to us at dinner-time (with his eyebrows lifted up, and his legs well asunder, as 'Johnny Brooks' Fair'; at which Arthur, who was drinking bitter ale, nearly laughed himself to death. Berry is always unfortunate, and when I asked what had happened to Berry on board the steamboat, it appeared that 'an Irish gentleman which was drunk, and fancied himself the captain, wanted to knock Berry down.'

I am surprised by finding this place very much larger than I had supposed it to be. Its bye-parts are bad enough, but cleaner, too, than I had supposed them to be, and certainly very much cleaner than the old town of Edinburgh. The man who drove our jaunting-car yesterday hadn't a piece in his coat as big as penny roll, and had had his hat on (apparently without brushing it) ever since he was grown up. But he was remarkably intelligent and agreeable, with something to say about everything. For instance, when I



asked him what a certain building was, he didn't say 'courts of law' and nothing else, but: 'Av you plase, sir, it's the foor coorts o' looyers, where Misther O'Connell stood his trial wunst, ye'll remimber, sir, afore I tell ye of it.' When we got into the Phœnix Park, he looked round him as if it were his own, and said: 'THAT's a park, sir, av yer plase.' I complimented it, and he said: 'Gintlemen tills me as they'r bin, sir, over England and never see a park aqualling ov it. 'Tis eight mile roond, sir, ten mile and a half long, and in the month of May the hawthorn trees are as beautiful as brides with their white jewels on. Yonder's the vice-regal lodge, sir; in them two corners lives the two sicretirries, wishing I was them, sir. There's air here, sir, av yer plase! There's scenery here, sir! There's mountains—thim, sir! Yer coonsider it a park, sir? It is that, sir!'

You should have heard John in my bedroom this morning endeavouring to imitate a bath-man, who had resented his interference, and had said as to the shower-bath: 'Yer'll not be touching *that*, young man. Divil a touch yer'll touch o' that instrumēt, young man!' It was more ridiculously unlike the reality than I can express to you, yet he was so delighted with his powers that he went off in the absurdest little gingerbeery giggle, backing into my portmantau all the time.

I shall write to Katie next, and then to Aunty. My cold, I am happy to report, is very much better. I lay in the wet all night on deck, on board the boat, but am not as yet any the worse for it. Arthur was quite insensible when we got to Dublin, and stared at our luggage without in the least offering to claim it. He left his kindest love for all before he went out.—Ever, my dearest Mamie,

Your most affectionate Father.

MORRISON'S HOTEL, DUBLIN, *Wednesday, Twenty-fifth August, 1858.*

Miss  
Hogarth.

I begin my letter to you to-day, though I don't know when I may send it off. We had a very good house last night. For 'Little Dombey,' this morning, we have an immense stall let—already more than two hun-

dred—and people are now fighting in the agent's shop to take more.

They were a highly excitable audience last night, but they certainly did not comprehend—internally and intelligently comprehend—*The Chimes* as a London audience do. I am quite sure of it. I very much doubt the Irish capacity of receiving the pathetic; but of their quickness as to the humorous there can be no doubt. I shall see how they go along with Little Paul, in his death, presently.

We meant, as I said in a letter to Katie, to go to Queens-town yesterday and bask on the seashore. But there is always so much to do that we couldn't manage it after all. We expect a tremendous house to-morrow night as well as to-day. I have become a wonderful Irishman—must play an Irish part some day—and Arthur's only relaxation is when I enact 'John and the Boots,' which I consequently do enact all day long. The papers are full of remarks upon my white tie, and describe it as being of enormous size, which is a wonderful delusion, because, as you very well know, it is a small tie. Generally, I am happy to report, the Emerald press is in favour of my appearance, and likes my eyes. But one gentleman comes out with a letter at Cork, wherein he says that although only forty-six I look like an old man. *He* is a rum customer, I think.

John has given it up altogether as to rivalry with the Boots, and did not come into my room this morning at all. Boots appeared triumphant and alone. He was waiting for me at the hotel-door last night. 'Whaa't sart of a hoose, sir?' he asked me. 'Capital.' 'The Lard be praised fur the 'onor o' Dooblin!'

Arthur buys bad apples in the streets and brings them home and doesn't eat them, and then I am obliged to put them in the balcony because they make the room smell faint. Also he meets countrymen with honeycomb on their heads, and leads them (by the buttonhole when they have one) to this gorgeous establishment and requests the bar to buy honeycomb for his breakfast; then it stands upon the sideboard uncovered and the flies fall into it. He buys owls, too, and



castles, and other horrible objects, made in bog-oak; and he is perpetually snipping pieces out of newspapers and sending them all over the world. While I am reading he conducts the correspondence, and his great delight is to show me seventeen or eighteen letters when I come, exhausted, into the retiring-place. Berry has not got into any particular trouble for forty-eight hours, except that he is all over boils. I have prescribed the yeast, but ineffectually. It is indeed a sight to see him and John sitting in pay-boxes, and surveying Ireland out of pigeon-holes.

*Same Evening before Bed-time.*

Everybody was at 'Little Dombey' to-day, and although I had some little difficulty to work them up in consequence of the excessive crowding of the place, and the difficulty of shaking the people into their seats, the effect was unmistakable and profound. The crying was universal, and they were extraordinarily affected. There is no doubt we could stay here a week with that one reading, and fill the place every night. Hundreds of people have been there to-night, under the impression that it would come off again. It was a most decided and complete success.

Here follows a dialogue (but it requires imitation), which I had yesterday morning with a little boy of the house—landlord's son, I suppose—about Plorn's age. I am sitting on the sofa writing, and find him sitting beside me.

INIMITABLE. Holloa, old chap.

YOUNG IRELAND. Hal-loo!

INIMITABLE (*in his delightful way*). What a nice old fellow you are. I am very fond of little boys.

YOUNG IRELAND. Air yer? Ye'r right.

INIMITABLE. What do you learn, old fellow?

YOUNG IRELAND (*very intent on INIMITABLE, and always childish, except in his brogue*). I lairn wureds of three sillibils, and wureds of two sillibils, and wureds of one sillibil.

INIMITABLE (*gaily*). Get out, you humbug! You learn only words of one syllable.

YOUNG IRELAND (*laughs heartily*). You may say that it is mostly wureds of one sillibil.

INIMITABLE. Can you write?

YOUNG IRELAND. Not yet. Things comes 'by deegray's.

INIMITABLE. Can you cipher?

YOUNG IRELAND (*very quickly*). Wha'at 's that?

INIMITABLE. Can you make figures?

YOUNG IRELAND. I can make a nought, which is not asy, being roond.

INIMITABLE. I say, old boy, wasn't it you I saw on Sunday morning in the hall, in a soldier's cap? You know—in a soldier's cap?

YOUNG IRELAND (*cogitating deeply*). Was it a very good cap?

INIMITABLE. Yes.

YOUNG IRELAND. Did it fit unkommon?

INIMITABLE. Yes.

YOUNG IRELAND. Dat was me!

There are two stupid old louts at the room, to show people into their places, whom John calls 'them two old Paddies,' and of whom he says, that he 'never see nothing like them (snigger) hold idiots' (snigger). They bow and walk backwards before the grandees, and our men hustle them while they are doing it.

We walked out last night, with the intention of going to the theatre; but the Piccolomini establishment (they were doing the *Lucia*) looked so horribly like a very bad jail, and the Queen's looked so blackguardly, that we came back again, and went to bed. I seem to be always either in a railway carriage, or reading, or going to bed. I get so knocked up, whenever I have a minute to remember it, that then I go to bed as a matter of course.

I am looking forward to the last Irish reading on Thursday, with great impatience. But when we shall have turned this week, once knocked off Belfast, I shall see land, and shall (like poor Timber in the days of old) 'keep up a good heart.'  
—Ever, my dearest Georgy, Most affectionately.

BELFAST, Saturday, Twenty-eighth August, 1858.

When I went down to the Rotunda at Dublin on Thursday night, I said to Arthur, who came rushing at me: 'You needn't tell me. I know all about it.'

Miss  
Dickens.



The moment I had come out of the door of the hotel (a mile off), I had come against the stream of people turned away. I had struggled against it to the room. There, the crowd in all the lobbies and passages was so great, that I had a difficulty in getting in. They had broken all the glass in the pay-boxes. Our men were flattened against walls and squeezed against beams. Ladies stood all night with their chins against my platform. Other ladies sat all night upon my steps. You never saw such a sight. And the reading went tremendously! It is much to be regretted that we troubled ourselves to go anywhere else in Ireland.

We arrived here yesterday at two. The same scene was repeated with the additional feature, that the people are much rougher here than in Dublin, and that there was a very great uproar at the opening of the doors, which, the police in attendance being quite inefficient and only looking on, it was impossible to check. Arthur was in the deepest misery because shillings got into stalls, and half-crowns got into shillings, and stalls got nowhere, and there was immense confusion. It ceased, however, the moment I showed myself; and all went most brilliantly, in spite of a great piece of the cornice of the ceiling falling with a great crash within four or five inches of the head of a young lady on my platform (I was obliged to have people there), and in spite of my gas suddenly going out at the time of the game of forfeits at Scrooge's nephew's, through some Belfastian gentleman accidentally treading on the flexible pipe, and needing to be relighted.

We shall not get to Cork before mid-day on Monday; it being difficult to get from here on Sunday. We hope to be able to start away to-morrow morning to see the Giant's Causeway (some sixteen miles off), and in that case we shall sleep at Dublin to-morrow night, leaving here by the train at half-past three in the afternoon. Dublin, you must understand, is on the way to Cork. This is a fine place, surrounded by lofty hills. The streets are very wide, and the place is very prosperous. The whole ride from Dublin here is through a very picturesque and various country; and the amazing thing is, that it is all particularly neat and or-

derly, and that the houses (outside at all events) are all brightly whitewashed and remarkably clean. I want to climb one of the neighbouring hills before this morning's *Dombey*.

Our men are deeply interested in the success, and are as zealous and ardent as possible.—Ever my dearest Mamie,

Your most affectionate Father.

MORRISON'S HOTEL, DUBLIN, *Sunday Night, Twenty-ninth August, 1858.*

I am so delighted to find your letter here to-night (eleven o'clock), and so afraid that, in the wear and tear of this strange life, I have written to Gad's Hill in the wrong order, and have not written to you, as I should, that I resolved to write this before going to bed. You will find it a wretchedly stupid letter; but you may imagine, my dearest girl, that I am tired.

The success at Belfast has been equal to the success here. Enormous! I think them a better audience, on the whole, than Dublin; and the personal affection there was something overwhelming. I wish you and the dear girls could have seen the people look at me in the street; or heard them ask me, as I hurried to the hotel after reading last night, to 'do me the honour to shake hands, Mither Dickens, and God bless you, sir; not ounly for the light you've been to me this night, but for the light you've been in mee house, sir (and God love your face!) this many a year.' Every night, by the bye, since I have been in Ireland, the ladies have beguiled John out of the bouquet from my coat. And yesterday morning, as I had showered the leaves from my geranium in reading 'Little Dombey,' they mounted the platform, after I was gone, and picked them all up as keepsakes!

I have never seen *men* go in to cry so undisguisedly as they did at that reading yesterday afternoon. They made no attempt whatever to hide it, and certainly cried more than the women. As to the 'Boots' at night, and 'Mrs. Gamp' too, it was just one roar with me and them, for they made me laugh so that sometimes I *could not* compose my face to go on.

You must not let the new idea of poor dear Landor efface the former image of the fine old man. I wouldn't blot him



out, in his tender gallantry, as he sat upon that bed at Forster's that night, for a million of wild mistakes at eighty years of age.

Tell the girls that Arthur and I have each ordered at Belfast a trim, sparkling, slap-up *Irish jaunting-car!!!* I flatter myself we shall astonish the Kentish people. It is the oddest carriage in the world, and you are always falling off. But it is gay and bright in the highest degree. Wonderfully Neapolitan.

What with a sixteen-mile ride before we left Belfast, and a sea-beach walk, and a two-o'clock dinner, and a seven-hours' railway ride since, I am—as we say here—'a thrifle weary.' But I really am in wonderful force, considering the work. For which I am, as I ought to be, very thankful.

Arthur was exceedingly unwell last night—could not cheer up at all. He was so very unwell that he left the hall (!) and became invisible after my five minutes' rest. I found him at the hotel in a jacket and slippers, and with a hot bath just ready. He was in the last stage of prostration. The local agent was with me, and proposed that he (the wretched Arthur) should go to his office and balance the accounts then and there. He went, in the jacket and slippers, and came back in twenty minutes, *perfectly well*, in consequence of the admirable balance. He is now sitting opposite to me ON THE BAG OF SILVER (it must be dreadfully hard), writing to Boulogne.

Best love to Mamie and Katie, and dear Plorn, and all the boys left when this comes to Gad's Hill; also to my dear good Anne, and her little woman.      Ever affectionately.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,  
Monday, Sixth September, 1858.

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

MY DEAR WILKIE,—First, let me report myself here for something less than eight-and-forty-hours. I come last (and direct—a pretty hard journey) from Limerick.

The work is very hard, sometimes overpowering; but I am none the worse for it, and arrived here quite fresh.

Secondly, will you let me recommend the enclosed letter from Wigan, as the groundwork of a capital article, in your way, for *H. W.*? There is not the least objection to a plain reference to him, or to Phelps, to whom the same thing happened a year or two ago, near Islington, in the case of a clever and capital little daughter of his. I think it a capital opportunity for a discourse on gentility with a glance at those other schools which advertise that the 'sons of gentlemen only' are admitted, and a just recognition of the greater liberality of our public schools. There are tradesmen's sons at Eton, and Charles Kean was at Eton, and Macready (also an actor's son) was at Rugby. Some such title as 'Scholastic Flunkeydom,' or anything infinitely contemptuous, would help out the meaning. Surely such a schoolmaster must swallow all the silver forks that the pupils are expected to take when they come, and are not expected to take away with them when they go. And of course he could not exist, unless he had flunkey customers by the dozen.

Secondly—no, this is thirdly now—about the Christmas number. I have arranged so to stop my readings, as to be available for it on *Fifteenth of November*, which will leave me time to write a good article, if I clear my way to one. Do you see your way to our making a Christmas number of this idea that I am going very briefly to hint? Some disappointed person, man or woman, prematurely disgusted with the world, for some reason or no reason (the person should be young, I think) retires to an old lonely house, or an old lonely mill, or anything you like, with one attendant, resolved to shut out the world, and hold no communion with it. The one attendant sees the absurdity of the idea, pretends to humour it, but really tries to slaughter it. Everything that happens, everybody that comes near, every breath of human interest that floats into the old place from the village, or the heath, or the four cross-roads near which it stands, and from which belated travellers stray into it, shows beyond mistake that you can't shut out the world; that you are in it, to be of it; that you get into a false position the moment you try to sever yourself from it; and that you must



mingle with it, and make the best of it, and make the best of yourself into the bargain.

If we could plot out a way of doing this together, I would not be afraid to take my part. If we could not, could we plot out a way of doing it, and taking in stories by other hands? If we could not do either (but I think we could), shall we fall back upon a round of stories again? That I would rather not do, if possible. Will you think about it?—  
Ever, my dear Wilkie, Affectionately yours.

STATION HOTEL, YORK, *Friday, Tenth September, 1858.*

Miss Mary Boyle.

Miss Mary  
Boyle.

DEAREST MEERY,—First let me tell you that all the magicians and spirits in your employ have fulfilled the instructions of their wondrous mistress to admiration. Flowers have fallen in my path wherever I have trod; and when they rained upon me at Cork I was more amazed than you ever saw me.

Secondly, receive my hearty and loving thanks for that same. (Excuse a little Irish in the turn of that sentence, but I can't help it.)

I really cannot tell you how truly and tenderly I feel your letter, and how gratified I am by its contents. Your truth and attachment are always so precious to me that I *cannot* get my heart out on my sleeve to show it you. It is like a child, and at the sound of some familiar voices, 'goes and hides.'

You know what an affection I have for Mrs. Watson, and how happy it made me to see her again—younger, much, than when I first knew her in Switzerland.

God bless you always!      Ever affectionately yours.

ROYAL HOTEL, SCARBOROUGH, *Sunday, Twelfth September, 1858.*

Miss  
Hogarth.

MISS HOGARTH. MY DEAREST GEORGY,—We had a very fine house indeed at York. At Harrogate yesterday; the queerest place, with the strangest people in it, leading the oddest lives of dancing, newspaper reading, and tables d'hôte. The piety of York obliging us to leave that place for this at six this morning, and there being no night train

from Harrogate, we had to engage a special engine. We got to bed at one, and were up again before five; which, after yesterday's fatigues, leaves me a little worn out at this present.

We have a charming room, overlooking the sea. Leech is here (living within a few doors), with the partner of his bosom, and his young family. I write at ten in the morning, having been here two hours; and you will readily suppose that I have not seen him.

Of news, I have not the faintest breath. I seem to have been doing nothing all my life but riding in railway-carriages and reading. The railway of the morning brought us through Castle Howard, and under the woods of Easthorpe, and then just below Malton Abbey. It was a most lovely morning, and, tired as I was, I couldn't sleep for looking out of window.

Yesterday, at Harrogate, two circumstances occurred which gave Arthur great delight. Firstly, he chafed his legs sore with his black bag of silver. Secondly, the landlord asked him as a favour, 'If he could oblige him with a little silver.' He obliged him directly with some forty pounds' worth; and I suspect the landlord to have repented of having approached the subject. After the reading last night we walked over the moor to the railway, three miles, leaving our men to follow with the luggage in a light cart. They passed us just short of the railway, and John was making the night hideous and terrifying the sleeping country, by *playing the horn* in prodigiously horrible and unmusical blasts.

My dearest love, of course, to the dear girls, and to the noble Plorn. Apropos of children, there was one gentleman at the 'Little Dombey' yesterday morning, who exhibited, or rather concealed, the profoundest grief. After crying a good deal without hiding it, he covered his face with both his hands, and laid it down on the back of the seat before him, and really shook with emotion. He was not in mourning, but I supposed him to have lost some child in old time. There was a remarkably good fellow of thirty or so, too, who found something so very ludicrous in 'Toots,' that he *could not* compose himself at all, but laughed until he sat



wiping his eyes with his handkerchief. And whenever he felt 'Toots' coming again he began to laugh and wipe his eyes afresh, and when he came he gave a kind of cry, as if it were too much for him. It was uncommonly droll, and made me laugh heartily.—Ever, dear Georgy,

Your most affectionate.

SCARBOROUGH ARMS, LEEDS, *Wednesday, Fifteenth September, 1858.*

Miss  
Dickens.

MY DEAREST MAMIE,—I have added a pound to the cheque. I would recommend your seeing the poor railway man again and giving him ten shillings, and telling him to let you see him again in about a week. If he be then still unable to lift weights and handle heavy things, I would then give him another ten shillings, and so on.

Since I wrote to Georgy from Scarborough, we have had, thank God, nothing but success. The Hull people (not generally considered excitable, even on their own showing) were so enthusiastic, that we were obliged to promise to go back there for two readings.

Arthur told you, I suppose, that he had his shirt-front and waistcoat torn off last night? He was perfectly enraptured in consequence. Our men got so knocked about that he gave them five shillings apiece on the spot. John passed several minutes upside down against a wall, with his head amongst the people's boots. He came out of the difficulty in an exceedingly touzled condition, and with his face much flushed. For all this, and their being packed as you may conceive they would be packed, they settled down the instant I went in, and never wavered in the closest attention for an instant. It was a very high room, and required a great effort.

These streets look like a great circus with the season just finished. All sorts of garish triumphal arches were put up for the Queen, and they have got smoky, and have been looked out of countenance by the sun, and are blistered and patchy, and half up and half down, and are hideous to behold. Spiritless men (evidently drunk for some time in the royal honour) are slowly removing them, and on the whole it is more like the clearing away of *The Frozen Deep*

at Tavistock House than anything within your knowledge—with the exception that we are not in the least sorry, as we were then. Vague ideas are in Arthur's head that when we come back to Hull, we are to come here, and are to have the Town Hall (a beautiful building), and read to the million. I can't say yet. That depends. I remember that when I was here before (I came from Rockingham to make a speech), I thought them a dull and slow audience. I hope I may have been mistaken. I never saw better audiences than the Yorkshire audiences generally.

I am so perpetually at work or asleep, that I have not a scrap of news.

Tell the servants that I remember them, and hope they will live with us many years.—Ever, my dearest Mamie,

Your most affectionate Father.

KING'S HEAD, SHEFFIELD, *Friday, Seventeenth September, 1858.*

I write you a few lines to Tavistock House, <sup>Miss</sup> thinking you may not be sorry to find a note from <sup>Hogarth.</sup> me there on your arrival from Gad's Hill.

Halifax was too small for us. I never saw such an audience though. They were really worth reading to for nothing, though I didn't do exactly that. It is as horrible a place as I ever saw, I think.

The trains are so strange and unintelligible in this part of the country that we were obliged to leave Halifax at eight this morning, and breakfast on the road—at Huddersfield again, where we had an hour's wait. Wills was in attendance on the platform, and took me (here at Sheffield, I mean) out to Frederick Lehmann's house to see Mrs. Wills. She looked pretty much the same as ever, I thought, and was taking care of a very pretty little boy. The house and grounds are as nice as anything *can* be in this smoke. A heavy thunderstorm is passing over the town, and it is raining hard too.

This is a stupid letter, my dearest Georgy, but I write in a hurry, and in the thunder and lightning, and with the crowd of to-night before me. Ever most affectionately.



STATION HOTEL, NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE,  
*Sunday, Twenty-sixth September, 1858.*

## EXTRACT

Miss  
Hogarth.

The girls (as I have no doubt they have already told you for themselves) arrived here in good time yesterday, and in very fresh condition. They persisted in going to the room last night, though I had arranged for their remaining quiet.

We have done a vast deal here. I suppose you know that we are going to Berwick, and that we mean to sleep there and go on to Edinburgh on Monday morning, arriving there before noon? If it be as fine to-morrow as it is to-day, the girls will see the coast piece of railway between Berwick and Edinburgh to great advantage. I was anxious that they should, because that kind of pleasure is really almost the only one they are likely to have in their present trip.

Stanfield and Roberts are in Edinburgh, and the Scottish Royal Academy gave them a dinner on Wednesday, to which I was very pressingly invited. But, of course, my going was impossible. I read twice that day.

I read at Sunderland in a beautiful new theatre, and (I thought to myself) quite wonderfully. Such an audience I never beheld for rapidity and enthusiasm. The room in which we acted (converted into a theatre afterwards) was burnt to the ground a year or two ago. We found the hotel, so bad in our time, really good. I walked from Durham to Sunderland, and from Sunderland to Newcastle.

My best love to the noble Plornish. If he is quite reconciled to the postponement of his trousers, I should like to behold his first appearance in them. But, if not, as he is such a good fellow, I think it would be a pity to disappoint and try him.

And now, my dearest Georgy, I think I have said all I have to say before I go out for a little air. I had a very hard day yesterday, and am tired.

Ever your most affectionate.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON,  
Sunday, Tenth October, 1858.

MY DEAR FORSTER,—As to the truth of the readings, I cannot tell you what the demonstrations of personal regard and respect are. How the densest and most uncomfortably-packed crowd will be hushed in an instant when I show my face. How the youth of colleges, and the old men of business in the town, seem equally unable to get near enough to me when they cheer me away at night. How common people and gentlefolks will stop me in the streets and say: ‘Mr. Dickens, will you let me touch the hand that has filled my home with so many friends?’ And if you saw the mothers, and fathers, and sisters, and brothers in mourning, who invariably come to ‘Little Dombey,’ and if you studied the wonderful expression of comfort and reliance with which they hang about me, as if I had been with them, all kindness and delicacy, at their own little death-bed, you would think it one of the strangest things in the world.

Mr. John  
Forster.

As to the mere effect, of course, I don’t go on doing the thing so often without carefully observing myself and the people too in every little thing, and without (in consequence) greatly improving in it.

At Aberdeen, we were crammed to the street twice in one day. At Perth (where I thought when I arrived there literally could be nobody to come), the nobility came posting in from thirty miles round, and the whole town came and filled an immense hall. As to the effect, if you had seen them after Lilian died, in *The Chimes*, or when Scrooge woke and talked to the boy outside the window, I doubt if you would ever have forgotten it. And at the end of *Dombey* yesterday afternoon, in the cold light of day, they all got up, after a short pause, gentle and simple, and thundered and waved their hats with that astonishing heartiness and fondness for me, that for the first time in all my public career they took me completely off my legs, and I saw the whole eighteen hundred of them reel on one side as if a shock from without had shaken the hall.

The dear girls have enjoyed themselves immensely, and their trip has been a great success. I hope I told you (but I for-



get whether I did or no) how splendidly Newcastle<sup>1</sup> came out. I am reminded of Newcastle at the moment because they joined me there.

I am anxious to get to the end of my readings, and to be at home again, and able to sit down and think in my own study. But the fatigue, though sometimes very great indeed, hardly tells upon me at all. And although all our people, from Smith downwards, have given in, more or less, at times, I have never been in the least unequal to the work, though sometimes sufficiently disinclined for it. My kindest and best love to Mrs. Forster.                      Ever affectionately.

ROYAL HOTEL, DERBY, *Friday, Twenty-second October, 1858.*

Miss  
Dickens.

MY DEAREST MAMIE,—I am writing in a very poor condition; I have a bad cold all over me, pains in my back and limbs, and a very sensitive and uncomfortable throat. There was a great draught up some stone steps near me last night, and I daresay that caused it.

The weather on my first two nights at Birmingham was so intolerably bad—it blew hard, and never left off raining for one single moment—that the houses were not what they otherwise would have been. On the last night the weather cleared, and we had a grand house.

Last night at Nottingham was almost, if not quite, the most amazing we have had. It is not a very large place, and the room is by no means a very large one. Here, it is a pretty room, but not large.

Arthur and I have considered Plornish's joke in all the immense numbers of aspects in which it presents itself to reflective minds. We have come to the conclusion that it is the best joke ever made. Give the dear boy my love, and the same to Georgy, and the same to Katey, and take the same yourself. Arthur (excessively low and inarticulate) mutters that he 'unites.'

(We knocked up Boylett, Berry, and John so frightfully yesterday, by tearing the room to pieces and altogether reversing it, as late as four o'clock, that we gave them a sup-

<sup>1</sup> The birthplace of Mr. Forster.

per last night. They shine all over to-day, as if it had been entirely composed of grease.)—Ever, my dearest Mamie,  
Your most affectionate Father.

WOLVERHAMPTON, *Wednesday, Third November, 1854.*

Little Leamington is represented as the dullest and worst of audiences. I found it very good indeed, even in the morning. Miss Hogarth.

The evening being fine, and blue being to be seen in the sky beyond the smoke, we expect to have a very full hall. Tell Mamey and Katey that if they had been with us on the railway to-day between Leamington and this place, they would have seen (though it is only an hour and ten minutes by the express) fires and smoke indeed. We came through a part of the Black Country that you know, and it looked at its blackest. All the furnaces seemed in full blast, and all the coal-pits to be working.

It is market-day here, and the ironmasters are standing out in the street (where they always hold high change), making such an iron hum and buzz, that they confuse me horribly. In addition there is a bellman announcing something—not the readings, I beg to say—and there is an excavation being made in the centre of the open place, for a statue, or a pump, or a lamp-post, or something or other, round which all the Wolverhampton boys are yelling and struggling.

My best love to the dear girls, and to Plorn, and to you, Marguerite and Ellen Stone not forgotten. All yesterday and to-day I have been doing everything to the tune of:

And the day is dark and dreary.

Ever, dearest Georgy,

Your most affectionate and faithful.

PS.—I hope the brazier is intolerably hot, and half stifles all the family. Then, and not otherwise, I shall think it in satisfactory work.



## 592 LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.,  
*Friday, Fifth November, 1858.*

Rev. James  
 White.

MY DEAR WHITE,—May I entreat you to thank Mr. Carter very earnestly and kindly in my name, for his proffered hospitality; and, further, to explain to him that since my readings began, I have known them to be incompatible with all social enjoyments, and have neither set foot in a friend's house nor sat down to a friend's table in any one of all the many places I have been to, but have rigidly kept myself to my hotels. To this resolution I must hold until the last. There is not the least virtue in it. It is a matter of stern necessity, and I submit with the worst grace possible.

Will you let me know, either at Southampton or Portsmouth, whether any of you, and how many of you, if any, are coming over, so that Arthur Smith may reserve good seats? Tell Lotty I hope she does not contemplate coming to the morning reading; I always hate it so myself.—Ever,  
 my dear White, Affectionately yours.

ROYAL HOTEL, SOUTHAMPTON, *Tuesday Evening, Ninth November, 1858.*

Mr. W.  
 Wilkie  
 Collins.

MY DEAR WILKIE,—I was under the impression that I was to finish at Brighton on the *afternoon* of Saturday. I find, however, that I read both in the afternoon and in the evening. I would propose to you to come and celebrate the end of the Tour by dining with us that day at the Bedford; but, between two readings, I am afraid it would rather bore than gratify your digestive functions.

Assuming it not to be worth your while to take a Saturday 'Return' to Brighton, then will you arrange to go down to Gad's Hill on Sunday in good time for dinner? I will go down by some train or other in good time for dinner too. How do you feel about having the big bedroom, and writing there through the week? I would go to work too, and we might do Heaven knows how much, with an escapade to town for a night, if we felt in the humour.

I pause for a reply. Let me find it at the Bedford at Brighton, when I get there on Friday forenoon.

Wills arranged with me that you were presently to receive sacks of Christmas 'matter'—not much 'mind' with it, I am afraid. . . . Ever affectionately.

BEDFORD HOTEL, *Saturday, Thirteenth November, 1858.*

MY DEAR WILKIE,—I am reading this afternoon. Dinner is ordered at five punctually. They will show you up into the sitting-room when you have read this, and will also show you your bedroom, which I have duly commanded. Think of our finding ready-taken here *one Thousand Stalls!* Ever affectionately.

Mr. W.  
Wilkie  
Collins.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Twenty-sixth November, 1858.*<sup>1</sup>

It has been a gloomy task, and has made my heart heavy. It is not likely that I can furnish you with any new particulars of interest concerning your lamented father. Such details of his life and struggles as I have often heard from himself are better known to you than to me; and my praises of him can make no new sound in your ears.

Mr.  
Blanchard  
Jerrold.

But as you wish me to note down for you my last remembrance and experience of him, I proceed to do so. It is natural that my thoughts should first rush back (as they instantly do) to the days when he began to be known to me, and to the many happy hours I afterwards passed in his society.

Few of his friends, I think, can have had more favourable opportunities of knowing him, in his gentlest and most affectionate aspect, than I have had. He was one of the gentlest and most affectionate of men. I remember very well that when I first saw him, in or about the year 1835—when I went into his sick-room in St. Michael's Grove, Brompton, and found him propped up in a great chair, bright-eyed, and eager and quick in spirit, but very lame in body—he gave me an impression of tenderness. It never became dissociated from him. There was nothing cynical or sour in his heart as I knew it. In the company of children and young people he

<sup>1</sup> Printed in *The Life of Douglas Jerrold*, by Blanchard Jerrold.



was particularly happy, and showed to extraordinary advantage. He never was so gay, so sweet-tempered, so pleasing, and so pleased as then. Among my own children I had observed this many and many a time. When they and I came home from Italy in 1845, your father went to Brussels to meet us in company with our friends, Mr. Forster and Mr. Maclise. We all travelled together about Belgium for a little while, and all came home together. He was the delight of the children all the time, and they were his delight. He was in his most brilliant spirits, and I doubt if he were ever more humorous in his life. But the most enduring impression that he left upon us who were grown up—and we have all often spoken of it since—was that Jerrold, in his amiable capacity of being easily pleased, in his freshness, in his good-nature, in his cordiality, and in the unrestrained openness of his heart, had quite captivated us.

Of his generosity I had a proof, within these two or three years, which it saddens me to think of now. There had been an estrangement between us—not on any personal subject, and not involving an angry word—and a good many months had passed without my once seeing him in the street, when it fell out that we dined, each with his own separate party, in the strangers' room of a club. Our chairs were almost back to back, and I took mine after he was seated at dinner. I said not a word (I am sorry to remember) and did not look that way. Before we had sat so, long, he openly wheeled his chair round, stretched out both his hands in a most engaging manner, and said aloud, with a bright and loving face that I can see as I write to you: 'For God's sake, let us be friends again! Life's not long enough for this!'

On Sunday, May 31st, 1857, I had an appointment to meet him at the Gallery of Illustration, in Regent Street. We had been advising our friend, Mr. Russell, in the condensation of his lectures on the war in the Crimea, and we had engaged with him to go over the last of the series there at one o'clock that day. Arriving some minutes before the time, I found your father sitting alone in the hall. 'There must be some mistake,' he said; no one else was there; the place was locked up; he had tried all the doors; and he had been waiting there

a quarter of an hour by himself. I sat down by him in a niche in the staircase, and he told me that he had been very unwell for three or four days. A window in his study had been newly painted, and the smell of the paint (he thought it must be that) had filled him with nausea and turned him sick, and he felt quite weak and giddy through not having been able to retain any food. He was a little subdued at first and out of spirits; but we sat there half an hour talking, and when we came out together he was quite himself.

In the shadow I had not observed him closely; but when we got into the sunshine of the streets, I saw that he looked ill. We were both engaged to dine with Mr. Russell at Greenwich, and I thought him so ill then that I advised him not to go, but to let me take him or send him home in a cab. He complained, however, of having turned so weak—we had now strolled as far as Leicester Square—that he was fearful he might faint in the cab, unless I could get him some restorative, and unless he could ‘keep it down.’ I deliberated for a moment whether to turn back to the Athenæum, where I could have got a little brandy for him, or to take him on into Covent Garden for the purpose; meanwhile, he stood leaning against the rails of the enclosure, looking for the moment very ill indeed. Finally, we walked on to Covent Garden, and before we had gone fifty yards he was very much better. On our way Mr. Russell joined us. He was then better still, and walked between us unassisted. I got him a hard biscuit and a little weak cold brandy-and-water, and begged him by all means to try to eat. He broke up and ate the greater part of the biscuit, and then was much refreshed and comforted by the brandy; he said that he felt the sickness was overcome at last, and that he was quite a new man; it would do him good to have a few quiet hours in the air, and he would go with us to Greenwich. I still tried to dissuade him, but he was by this time bent upon it, and his natural colour had returned, and he was very hopeful and confident.

We strolled through the Temple on our way to a boat, and I have a lively recollection of him stamping about Elm Tree Court, with his hat in one hand and the other pushing his hair back, laughing in his heartiest manner at a ridiculous re-



membrance we had in common, which I had presented in some exaggerated light to divert him. We found our boat and went down the river, looked at the *Leviathan*,<sup>1</sup> which was building, and talked all the way. It was a bright day, and as soon as we reached Greenwich we got an open carriage and went out for a drive about Shooter's Hill. In the carriage Mr. Russell read us his lecture, and we discussed it with great interest; we planned out the ground of Inkermann on the heath, and your father was very earnest indeed. The subject held us so that we were graver than usual; but he broke out at intervals in the same hilarious way as in the Temple, and he over and over again said to me, with great satisfaction, how happy he was that he had 'quite got over that paint!'

The dinner-party was a large one, and I did not sit near him at table. But he and I arranged before we went in to dinner that he was only to eat of some simple dish that we agreed upon, and was only to drink sherry-and-water. We broke up very early, and before I went away with Mr. Leech, who was to take me to London, I went round to Jerrold, for whom some one else had a seat in a carriage, and put my hand upon his shoulder, asking him how he was. He turned round to show me a glass beside him with a little wine-and-water in it. 'I have kept to the prescription; it has answered as well as this morning's, my dear old boy; I have quite got over the paint, and I am perfectly well.' He was really elated by the relief of having recovered, and was as quietly happy as I ever saw him. We exchanged 'God bless you!' and shook hands.

I went down to Gad's Hill next morning, where he was to write to me after a little while, appointing his own time for coming to see me there. A week afterwards another passenger in the railway carriage in which I was on my way to London Bridge opened his morning paper and said, 'Douglas Jerrold is dead!'

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<sup>1</sup> Afterwards called the *Great Eastern*.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.,  
*Wednesday Night, First December, 1858.*

MY DEAR ALBERT,—I cannot tell you how <sup>Mr. Albert Smith.</sup>grieved I am for poor dear Arthur (even you can hardly love him better than I do), or with what anxiety I shall wait for further news of him.

Pray let me know how he is to-morrow. Tell them at home that Olliffe is the kindest and gentlest of men—a man of rare experience and opportunity—perfect master of his profession, and to be confidently and implicitly relied upon. There is no man alive, in whose hands I would more thankfully trust myself.

I will write a cheery word to the dear fellow in the morning.  
 Ever faithfully.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.,  
*Thursday, Second December, 1858.*

MY DEAR ARTHUR,—I cannot tell you how sur- <sup>Mr. Arthur Smith.</sup>prised and grieved I was last night to hear from Albert of your severe illness. It is not my present intention to give you the trouble of reading anything like a letter, but I MUST send you my loving word, and tell you how we all think of you.

And here am I going off to-morrow to that meeting at Manchester without *you!* the wildest and most impossible of moves as it seems to me. And to think of my coming back by Coventry, on Saturday, to receive the chronometer—also without you!

If you don't get perfectly well soon, my dear old fellow, I shall come over to Paris to look after you, and to tell Olliffe (give him my love, and the same for Lady Olliffe) what a Blessing he is.

With kindest regards to Mrs. Arthur and her sister,  
 Ever heartily and affectionately yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.,  
*Monday, Thirteenth December, 1858.*

MY DEAR STONE,—Many thanks for these discourses. They are very good, I think, as expressing what many men have felt and thought; other- <sup>Mr. Frank Stone, A.R.A.</sup>



wise not specially remarkable. They have one fatal mistake, which is a canker at the root of their ever being widely useful. Half the misery and hypocrisy of the Christian world arises (as I take it) from a stubborn determination to refuse the New Testament as a sufficient guide in itself, and to force the Old Testament into alliance with it—whereof comes all manner of camel-swallowing and of gnat-straining. But so to resent this miserable error, or to (by any implication) depreciate the divine goodness and beauty of the New Testament, is to commit even a worse error. And to class Jesus Christ with Mahomet is simply audacity and folly. I might as well hoist myself on to a high platform, to inform my disciples that the lives of King George the Fourth and of King Alfred the Great belonged to one and the same category.

Ever affectionately.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Sunday, Nineteenth December, 1858.*

Mr. B. W.  
Procter.

MY DEAR PROCTER,—A thousand thanks for the little song. I am charmed with it, and shall be delighted to brighten *Household Words* with such a wise and genial light. I no more believe that your poetical faculty has gone by, than I believe that you have yourself passed to the better land. You and it will travel thither in company, rely upon it. So I still hope to hear more of the trade-songs, and to learn that the blacksmith has hammered out no end of iron into good fashion of verse, like a cunning workman, as I know him of old to be.

Very faithfully yours, my dear Procter.





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